

Israel resumes house demolitions

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The Israeli army on Friday began knocking down Palestinian houses which it says were built illegally in West Bank areas still controlled by the Jewish state, a military spokesman said. A house near the autonomous West Bank town of Jenin was demolished along with several buildings belonging to Palestinian farmers in the Jordan Valley region east of Nablus. The army also destroyed some terraced fields in the Hebron region. The spate of demolitions was suspended during the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations on the Hebron accord which was sealed last week after months of stalemate. The Israeli army has so far demolished more than 700 buildings which it says were built without correct permission.

Jordan Times

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Palestinians mark Hebron massacre

Relatives of Baruch Goldstein's victims demand settlers' eviction from tense town

HEBRON (Agencies) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat came to Hebron Friday to hold his first cabinet meeting in the newly Palestinian-ruled city while residents marked the third anniversary of the murder by a Jewish settler of at least 30 worshippers in Ibrahimi Mosque.

Mr. Arafat flew in by helicopter from his Gaza City headquarters for his second visit since Israeli troops withdrew from about 80 per cent of the city a week ago.

His first visit on Sunday was greeted by tens of thousands of cheering Palestinians, but Friday's arrival was more low key.

After landing, Mr. Arafat lit a torch in front of the new headquarters of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) symbolising the new era which has come to the last main West Bank town to have been under full Israeli occupation. About 200 people gathered amid heavy security to welcome their president.

In addition to ministers in Mr. Arafat's self-ruled cabinet, Friday night's meeting was to involve members of the executive committee of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), Palestinian officials said.

Mr. Arafat's visit coincided with ceremonies marking the third anniversary of the 1994 massacre at the Ibrahimi Mosque, a sacred site for both Muslims and Jews.

About 150 relatives of those killed in the massacre met in a hotel next to City Hall where there were new calls for Jewish settlers who still live under heavy Israeli army guard in the city center to leave.

"As long as the settlers are still here, there can still be massacres," said Aref Abu

Hadi, whose 12-year-old son Gabor was among those killed at the mosque.

Referring to a Jan. 1 shooting spree by an off-duty Israeli soldier which wounded six Palestinians in Hebron's market, he added: "We saw 15 days ago what can happen, and it will happen again unless they leave."

After prayers, dozens of Palestinians marched to the nearby Jewish settler enclave of Avraham Avinu. A few Israeli soldiers tried to push back the crowd. "Every day, you make new laws," Hashem Atrash, 37, yelled at the soldiers. "We don't want settlers here. We don't like them. They don't like us."

Eventually, the marchers turned back. The confrontation took place in the spot where last Friday, just hours after Israel's troop withdrawal from most of Hebron, Palestinians had thrown stones and potatoes at Israeli soldiers.

Ahead of Friday prayers, Israeli troops searched worshippers entering the mosque, and just before noon closed the gates when it became apparent they could not check everyone in time. Soldiers pushed back Palestinians trying to force their way into the shrine.

Nearly 2,000 Muslims remained outside and started rolling out prayer mats in the courtyard of the fortress-like shrine. More straw mats as well as buckets with water for the ritual washing of hands were passed from inside to those outside.

Worshippers were angry. Mahmoud Abdul Khalek, 50, from the northern West Bank town of Jenin, said he had driven for 150 kilometres just to pray at the mosque.

"They broke my heart," Mr. Abdul Khalek said of the soldiers who kept him from the site.

"Hebron was liberated and I thought I could go inside and pray freely," said the Arabic teacher. "I also wanted to remember the massacre. It is a crime we should remember."

In a memorial ceremony Friday, the head of the Islamic court in Hebron gave decorative wall plates with a picture of the mosque and the name of each victim to the families of those killed in 1994.

Adnan Abu Sneh, who lost his 14-year-old son Tareq in the massacre, said he would not rest until the settlers left Hebron. "I believe there will be no peace in this city," he said.

Also Friday six Israeli descendants of 67 Jews killed in riots in Hebron in 1929 met here with Palestinian security chief Jibril Rajoub to discuss ways of improving relations between Palestinians and Jews.

The six, led by a well-known leftwing militant Haim Hanegbi, congratulated Colonel Rajoub for the "liberation of Hebron" from Israeli rule and proposed the establishment of a museum in the city tracing the history of "Jewish-Arab cooperation," participants said.

Hebron's Jewish settlers constantly hark back to the 1929 riots to justify their complaints that Israel's recent withdrawal from most of Hebron has left them open to attacks by Palestinian radicals.

Hebron's Palestinians for their part say the Goldstein massacre demonstrates the threat represented by the continuing presence here of Jewish zealots.

Barak ready to accept state for Palestinians

PARIS (Agencies) — The leading contender to take over Israel's opposition Labour Party said on Friday he accepted the likelihood of a Palestinian state and criticised party colleagues who sought common ground with the ruling Likud Party.

Ehud Barak, a former armed forces chief who served as foreign minister until last May, said on a visit to Paris that Israel had to accept that the outcome of Middle East peace negotiations could well be a limited Palestinian state, but it was not up to Labour to demand this.

"We should realise that the end result of the whole process might become a kind of Palestinian state, even if this state is limited by agreements that are reached," he said.

Mr. Barak indirectly criticised his main rival to succeed Shimon Peres as Labour leader, Yossi Beilin, for holding exploratory talks with Likud politicians on a possible minimum platform for final status negotiations with the Palestinians.

He warned that Labour could lose its identity, weaken its position in criticising Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's hardline government and drive voters to vote for the secular leftist Meretz Party.

"In a way this kind of dialogue blurs the essence of difference instead of emphasising it," Mr. Barak told a

forum organised by French Jewish radio station Radio Shalom.

"If we disappear into Likud or blur the differences between us by a sort of destructive ambiguity, we will find ourselves unable to show the right way," he said.

The fundamental difference between the two main Israeli parties was that Labour wanted a complete separation from the Palestinians whereas Likud still wanted "to have its cake and eat it," by maintaining control, he said.

"I would prefer that Labour state its position clearly and stand like a lighthouse, telling the people that this is the right policy," he said.

Mr. Barak brushed aside the idea of entering a national unity government with Mr. Netanyahu, who faces opposition by hardliners in his party and far-rightists in his coalition to any concessions to the Palestinians.

But the former general said Labour would continue to provide Mr. Netanyahu with support whenever he took a step forward in the peace process, as it did last week in voting for the agreement on Hebron.

Mr. Netanyahu said Thursday he had a continuing plan should Yasser Arafat declare a Palestinian state, and a radio station

(Continued on page 7)



INNOCENT VICTIMS: The wife and daughter of a man killed in a bomb explosion in Algeria mourn the loss. At least 200 people were reportedly killed in a series of bomb blasts blamed on anti-government guerrillas in Algeria last week in a stepped-up campaign of ruthless violence (see page 5) (AFP photo)

Israel sends signals of possible resumption of talks with Syria

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel and Syria have been exchanging documents on a formula for resuming stalled peace talks but have not succeeded in reaching an agreement to return to the negotiating table, Israeli officials said Friday.

"Israel has effectively transmitted several messages to Damascus, mainly through the special European envoy for the Middle East, Miguel Moratinos," a senior foreign ministry official told AFP.

"We have assured Syria that we are not harbouring any aggressive intentions towards it and that we have not placed our troops on a state of alert," the official said.

"We have also shown our desire to return to the negotiations based on the Madrid conference (in March 1991) and Security Council Resolution 242," which calls for Israel's withdrawal from

occupied Arab territories.

But the official said Syria has responded by imposing demands that Israel considers unacceptable.

"(Syria) is not content with recommending that the negotiations resume on the principle of an exchange of land-for-peace, it is also demanding to begin with that Israel commits to withdraw from the Golan up to the June 4, 1967 line," he said.

The official also said that Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy and his Syrian counterpart Farouk Al Sharaa could meet during the April conference of Mediterranean and North African foreign ministers in Malta.

Syria demands that talks resume at the point where they broke off last February with the previous Israeli Labour government, which agreed in principle to withdraw from the occupied

Golan Heights in exchange for a peace treaty.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of the Likud Party, who before coming to office in June ruled out any return of the Golan, has refused to negotiate based on these unwritten agreements and says talks must resume without preconditions.

During the weekly Israeli cabinet meeting, Mr. Netanyahu said he was keen for the talks with Syria to resume as quickly as possible officials said.

But he said he did consider himself "tied to the verbal commitments given by the previous government on a withdrawal from the Golan," an official said.

The Yediot Aharanot newspaper reported on Friday that the exchange of documents was carried out via U.S. and European intermediaries with the consent of Mr. Netanyahu and Syrian President Hafez Al Assad.

King returns after Umra and talks with King Fahd

Prince Saud to visit Jordan after 'Eid

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein returned home on Friday after performing the Umra pilgrimage and talks with Saudi Arabia's King Fahd that resulted in the scheduling of a visit to Jordan by the Saudi foreign minister, Prince Saud Al Faisal.

An official statement issued here said Prince Saud will visit Jordan after 'Eid Al Fitr, which marks the end of the Holy Month of Ramadan, to follow up on the talks launched during the meeting between the two monarchs on Thursday.

King Hussein, accompanied by members of the Royal family and Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, Royal Court Chief Awn Khasawneh and other officials, flew to Medina on Thursday. He was welcomed by Prince Mohammad Ben Abdul Aziz, governor of Medina, and senior Saudi officials.

King Hussein prayed at the Prophet Mohammad's Mosque in Medina before leaving for Mecca where he performed Umra.

King Hussein later visited Riyadh and met King Fahd for talks on issues of common concern and pan-Arab affairs.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said that in the talks, "which were held in a brotherly atmosphere, King Hussein noted that Jordan and Saudi Arabia were bound by very strong brotherly ties and called for efforts to be made to further stimulate common Arab action."

The two sides stressed the need for continued contacts among Arab leaders to enhance cooperation in political and economic fields. Petra said.

Upon his return to Amman the King and the delegation accompanying him were received by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and senior officials.

Albright talks tough on Sudan, Cuba and China

Cohen sworn in as defence secretary

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — The United States will seek to obtain new United Nations sanctions against Sudan because of its alleged support for terrorism. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said on Friday.

"We will continue to insist that Sudan desist from supporting terrorist activities and will be following up in New York to try to get additional sanctions," Ms. Albright told a news conference.

Meanwhile, former Senator William Cohen of Maine was sworn in as defence secretary, putting a Republican in President Bill Clinton's cabinet.

Mr. Cohen took the oath from Vice-President Al Gore in the White House Oval Office with President Clinton standing behind him.

Mr. Clinton said the Senate's 99-0 vote to confirm Mr. Cohen "sent a strong signal of its intention to work ... in a bipartisan spirit to preserve and enhance our national security. Bill Cohen is the embodiment of that spirit."

Mr. Cohen told Mr. Clinton he looked forward to "serving you on a bipartisan team to a new century with clarity of purpose."

In Mr. Clinton's two terms, Mr. Cohen is the first and only Republican in the 14-member cabinet. Ms. Albright was sworn in Thursday as the nation's first female secretary of state.

In her press conference on Friday Ms. Albright said Washington would maintain its tough isolationist policy on Cuba and said it was a mistake to have a "romantic view" of communist leader Fidel Castro.

"Cuba is an embarrassment to the Western hemisphere and I think we need to keep making clear that there needs to be a change there," she said.

Ms. Albright, living up to her reputation for tough talk, also took on China over Hong Kong and human rights.

"I stated during my confirmation hearings that I would tell it like it is to the American people and to whatever foreign leaders I deal with," she told the press conference.

(Continued on page 7)

Editor of Abed Rabbo detained on charges of slander

Two others convicted amid mounting controversy over tabloids' ethics

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The editor of a satiric weekly has been ordered detained by the Amman prosecutor for 15 days on charges for slandering a Jordanian deputy and a minister. A request to release him on bail was denied, official sources said Friday.

The prosecutor, Jamal Zoughby, said he issued the arrest order against Omar Nadi, editor-in-chief of the weekly Abed Rabbo, after complaints were filed by Minister of Public Works Abdul Hadi Majali and Islamist Deputy Ibrahim

Zeid Kilani.

Also on Thursday two editors of two weeklies were sentenced each to eight and nine months imprisonment by the Amman Court of First Instance after being found guilty of violating the Press and Publications Law.

Na'el Salah, editor of the 10-month-old weekly Al Haqiqa (the truth), who was detained for four days in July on charges of slander and lack of accuracy in reporting, was sentenced to nine months in prison and was ordered to pay JD15,000 for "spreading false news and publishing pornographic material."

"I am planning to appeal the sentence which was a surprise to me because this is the second time a journalist was sentenced to a prison term," Mr. Salah told the Jordan Times Friday.

In similar press and publication cases in the past, he added, journalists were ordered only to pay a maximum fine of JD 1,000.

Mr. Salah, who was standing trial at the court for 11 cases of the Press and Publications Law violations, was found guilty in three of those lawsuits. Khalid Kassabeh, former editor of the tabloid weekly Al-Bilad, who is being tried in absentia, was

sentenced by the same court to eight-month imprisonment for publishing pornographic articles.

Mr. Kassabeh, who, according to informed sources, had emigrated to the United States, has 15 days to appeal the verdict.

If no appeal was made, the sources added, the sentence will be final.

Charges pressed by Mr. Zoughby against Mr. Nadi, who was arrested in his office, include overlooking objectivity, honesty and accuracy in reporting, publishing inaccurate news, slander and tarnishing the image and dignity of individuals.

"The reason I ordered Mr. Nadi's detention was the direct slander published against Deputy Kilani describing him as a 'hypocrite' and the direct accusation against Minister Majali of stealing cars," Mr. Zoughby said.

Mr. Zoughby told the Jordan Times Friday that Mr. Nadi pleaded not guilty to the charges, adding that the case will be referred to court within a few days.

Editor Abed Rabbo Yousef Gheishan charged that Mr. Kilani and Mr. Majali "are in a sensitive

(Continued on page 7)

UAE

Prepares second shipment of relief to Iraq

ABU DHABI (AFP) — A group of United Arab Emirates (UAE) volunteers is preparing to send a second shipment of food and medicine for Iraqi children, many of whom are suffering from malnutrition because of crippling U.N. sanctions.

Earlier this month, 10 UAE men sailed to Iraq with 32 tonnes of milk, medicine, hospital equipment and other items, in the first such shipment from an Arab country to Iraq since the embargo was imposed after Iraqi troops invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

The second delivery will be much bigger, and volunteers have been promised a "surprise" by Sheikh Mohammad Ben Rashid Al Maktum. The crown prince of Dubai and UAE defence minister, who donated 1.5 million dirhams (\$408,000) to the previous shipment.

There will be a surprise by Sheikh Mohammad for the next trip. We don't know what it is," said Mohammad Rakan, information officer for the campaign.

Dubbed the "love trip," it will include one or two ships with a capacity of 1,100 tonnes and it will be launched in the first week of February. The two vessels have been donated by local businessmen.

The first shipment arrived in Iraq on Jan. 12 and the



Turkish trucks loaded with goods for Iraq wait at the border crossing. The flow of goods into Iraq through Turkey has gone up dramatically in recent months, reports say (AFP photo)

men themselves supervised the distribution of aid to children in hospitals.

"The situation in Iraq is really tragic. You just go there and see... children are suffering from malnutrition and diseases and there is a severe shortage in medical supplies and equipment at the hospitals," Mr. Rakan said.

"Some of our men could not stop crying when they saw the children... How could man in this age accept this situation. It is not their fault."

Mr. Rakan was speaking inside a large Arabian tent set up at the Abu Dhabi sea-side to collect cash and relief donations. Piles of clothes, milk bottles, medicine and other items filled the tent, which was adorned on the outside with slogans

reading "From the UAE people to the Iraqi children with love."

Mr. Rakan said there had been a rush by the public and companies to donate money and relief items and their campaign has received encouragement from officials.

"We have the blessing and support of their highnesses the president Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan, Sheikh Mohammad and the other rulers," Sheikh Zayed, 80, has repeatedly called for a reconciliation between Arab states and Iraq and urged a lifting of the embargo, which the United Nations says will only be removed once Iraq dismantles its programmes for weapons of mass destruction.

Last month, Iraq resumed exports of more than 500,000 barrels of oil a day under an agreement with the United Nations to finance food and medicine imports, the first easing of the embargo in more than six years.

"We are determined to help the Iraqi children. There will be a third ship and there could be a fourth and a fifth," Mr. Rakan said.

"Our objective is purely humanitarian and has nothing to do with politics or propaganda. We just want to help in saving the Iraqi children and to stir the human feelings everywhere... we hope others will follow suit."

According to French humanitarian group Equilibre quoting U.N. reports, the sanctions have caused

the deaths of some 560,000 Iraqi children under five years old.

Mr. Rakan said the UAE men were moved by the reception from the Iraqis to the first shipment. "It was a numinous welcome which we had not expected. Thousands of them flocked to the port and were chanting for the UAE and carrying portraits of its president and rulers."

He said the first ship had not been disturbed by Western navies enforcing the U.N. embargo against Iraq because they had been officially informed about it.

In the last two years, the UAE government has sent a number of ships carrying aid to Iraq, although it has not had diplomatic relations with Baghdad since the 1991 Gulf war.

Netanyahu backs police probe into attorney general scandal

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called Friday for a police probe into charges he nominated a close associate to be attorney general as part of a deal to spare a key political ally from conviction on corruption charges.

According to allegations in the Israeli media, Ariel Deri of the powerful ultra-orthodox party Shas had threatened to withhold his group's support for Mr. Netanyahu's agreement with the Palestinians last week to extend self-rule to Hebron if his choice for attorney general was not accepted.

According to a report on Israel's Channel 1 television, Mr. Deri allegedly had previously concluded an agreement with prospective attorney general, Roni Bar-On, that would have assured him a plea-bargain in his ongoing corruption trial.

Mr. Netanyahu angrily denied there was any connection between his nomination of Bar-On, a top official of his Likud Party, and Mr. Deri's legal problems or the Hebron agreement.

"There must be an independent and objective police investigation to reveal the truth in this affair," Mr. Netanyahu said Friday.

State prosecutor Edna Arbel was due to meet soon with the chief of police investigators to discuss the possibility of opening an investigation into the Bar-On affair, judicial sources said.

Shas is the second biggest party in Mr. Netanyahu's coalition government and its two ministers provided the prime minister with his majority when the cabinet voted 11 to seven to approve the Hebron deal last week.

Mr. Bar-On resigned within 12 hours of taking office under public criticism he was unfit for the job.

Mr. Deri, who three years ago was interim minister but now faces trial for allegedly accepting bribes, hoped Mr. Bar-On would drop some of the charges against him and

pave the way for his return to the cabinet, Israel television said earlier.

The attorney general is responsible for prosecuting political figures accused of illegal actions.

Mr. Netanyahu bowed to the pressure and nominated Mr. Bar-On to the post Jan. 10, five days before the Hebron deal was signed with the Palestinians and then approved by the Knesset, the television said.

But Mr. Bar-On, withdrew his nomination after the supreme court ordered a delay in his appointment following widespread protests from opposition and coalition members against the "political" appointment.

Labour Deputy Ophir Pines had filed a complaint with the court charging that Mr. Bar-On's appointment was politically motivated and designed to hinder investigations into right-wing politicians.

Mr. Bar-On, a well-known defence attorney and member of the central committee of Mr. Netanyahu's Likud Party, was to replace Michael Ben-Yair, an appointee of Israel's former Labour government who had angered the prime minister by indicting several of his close associates.

The justices did not rule that Mr. Bar-On's appointment was illegal, but said they wanted to study the written protocol on his nomination.

This latest turn in the affair, "if proven true, is the most serious violation of the rule of law Israel has ever seen. It's on the level of Watergate," Israeli radio's legal commentator Moshe Haneghi said.

The television story by the story, saying it had "compromising" recordings of conversations of Mr. Deri praising the appointment of Mr. Bar-On.

The Labour Party demanded that a "state commission of inquiry" be set up to look into the matter while the far-left opposition Meretz Party has called for a police investigation.

Clerides grants pardon to three Israelis

NICOSIA (AFP) — Three Israelis involved in a daring escape bid from Cyprus police custody were granted a rare presidential pardon on Thursday, less than three months into their sentences.

Central Prison governor George Anastasiadis said the Israelis would be deported from Cyprus aboard a flight to Tel Aviv on Sunday.

David Biton, 24, and Shimon Amor, 28, stopped at gunpoint the police car Sept. 11 in which Biton's 21-year-old brother, Avi, a star of the Israeli youth football team, and a fourth Israeli, Shuki Samana, 24, were handcuffed.

David Biton and Amor severed the police radio link, cut the handcuffs off Avi Biton, and Samana and all four fled on two motorcycles across the green line and into Turkish-held northern Cyprus.

The northern authorities handed the four men to U.N. officials and they were sent back to Cyprus police.

They were tried in November with David Biton and Amor receiving four-year sentences, while Samana walked free and Avi Biton received a 30-month sentence for exchanging and possessing fake U.S. bills.

An Israeli embassy spokesman in Nicosia said he was unaware of the reasons for the pardon, but it is believed that defence lawyers, in filing for the deportation, cited the fact that their clients were the only three Israelis at the prison, which also houses about 150 Arabs.

They questioned the effectiveness of security measures to prevent any friction between the inmates, as there had been an earlier incident between one of the Israelis and an Arab prisoner.

U.S. journalists call for release of Turkish editor

NEW YORK (R) — More than 300 leading U.S. journalists, media executives and human rights activists on Thursday asked the Turkish government to immediately free jailed editor Ozgur Yurtcu, now in the third year of an almost 16-year sentence.

A petition was handed to Turkish Ambassador Nuzhet Kandemir at the Turkish embassy in Washington by officials of the committee to protect journalists which last November gave Mr. Yurtcu its International Press

Freedom (CPS) award.

Mr. Yurtcu was sentenced to jail for allegedly publishing "separatist propaganda" about the conflict with Kurdish insurgents under Turkey's anti-terrorism laws. He was the editor of the now defunct daily Ozgur Gundem.

CPJ chairwoman Kati Marton said the Turkish ambassador agreed to send the petition to his government. The ambassador noted that many leading Turkish journalists and some government officials shared the group's

concerns, a statement from the journalist group said.

Among those signing the petition were Terry Anderson, the former AP reporter held hostage in Lebanon for seven years, New Yorker editor Tina Brown, NBC anchorman Tom Brokaw, billionaire financier George Soros, Nobel Peace Prize winner Elie Wiesel, CBS anchorman Dan Rather, New York Times publisher Arthur Ochs Sulzberger, cartoonist Gary Trudeau and Time magazine editor Walter Isaacson.

U.S.: Company deals with Sudan and Syria are within law

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States said on Thursday it operated within the law in permitting American firms to do business with Sudan and Syria, which Washington considers state sponsors of terrorism.

Although Washington has imposed comprehensive sanctions on five countries on its "terrorism" list — Libya, Iran, Iraq, North Korea and Cuba — the sanctions on two other "terrorism" list states — Sudan and Syria — are "not total (but) partial," state department spokesman Nicholas Burns said.

As a result, there can be no arms sales to Sudan and Syria and transfers of money to those countries "that would support acts of terrorism in the United States," he said.

But "if individual financial transactions are found not to have an impact on any potential act of terrorism or to fund

any group that supports terrorism, then... These financial transactions or investments may be permitted," he said.

The Washington Post reported on Thursday that the administration had eased a law barring financial transactions between U.S. corporations and countries accused of supporting terrorism to aid a California-based oil firm seeking a stake in a \$930 million deal in Sudan.

Quoting unidentified federal officials and documents, the newspaper said the August 1996 exemption to the anti-terrorism act — which President Bill Clinton signed just four months earlier — allowed Occidental Petroleum to seek a share of a major oil deal in Sudan.

The exemption cleared the way for the company to negotiate with the Khartoum government despite the

administration's avowed policy of restricting U.S. commerce with Sudan and six other countries blacklisted by the state department for supporting "terrorism," the Post said.

A state department official denied that Occidental had received any special treatment. "No exemptions to the Syria or Sudan regulations were requested or even discussed in any way by Occidental or any other company," said the official, who requested anonymity.

The newspaper also reported that a similar exemption for Syria was put into effect last August.

Mr. Burns told a news briefing he did not know details of the Occidental case.

The other State Department official said no waiver was needed because the regulations were written to allow business deals. He said when

Congress passed the anti-terrorism law, "at no point was there any indication that anyone on the hill wanted to curtail legitimate commercial or humanitarian transactions."

The Post said the Syria exemption was intended to encourage Damascus' participation in the Middle East peace process. But Mr. Burns said "I'm not aware of any instance where the United States has given Syria a break in the application of our law, because we wanted to promote a Syrian position on the Middle East negotiations."

The exemption for Sudan allowed Occidental to join Canada's Arakis Energy Corp in pursuing the development of a promising but abandoned oil field in southern Sudan containing an estimated 3.5 billion barrels, the Post said.

But the newspaper reported the Sudanese government

abruptly excluded Occidental from the Arakis-led consortium in November for "political reasons."

On a related matter, the United States called for neighbouring African countries to stop hiring mercenary units that are fighting in Sudan.

"We are aware that there are mercenary groups that hire themselves out... On one side or another in a variety of African countries in the past," Mr. Burns said, citing Angola and Sierra Leone.

"And our advice to the Angolans, and to the Sierra Leoneans, and our advice to all of the actors in eastern Sudan these days is not to hire mercenary outfits, not to bring arms in that just kill innocent civilians, but to try to lead the situation towards a peaceful outcome through negotiations," he said.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

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PROGRAMME TWO

- 13:30 Cartoon
- 14:30 Chris Cross
- 15:00 Feature Film — "Post the Beaches"
- 16:30 Call For Prayer And Bicar
- 17:05 Documentary
- 17:30 Muppet Show
- 18:00 Serie — Jack
- 19:00 Le Journal
- 19:15 Magazine — Zira
- 19:30 News Headlines
- 19:35 Comedy — Hanging with Mr. Cooper
- 20:00 Oriental Rug (Documentary)
- 20:30 Prison
- 21:10 Documentary
- 22:00 News In English
- 22:25 Lois & Clark — The New Adventures of Superman
- 23:00 Journey Into Islam
- 23:50 Mcgyver
- 23:59 Feature Film: "The Wild Rivers"
- 01:05 Ramadan Talks

PRAYER TIMES

- 05:09 Fajr
- 06:29 Sunrise Doha
- 11:48 Dhur
- 14:42 Asr
- 17:06 Maghreb
- 18:27 Isha

CHURCHES

- St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifeh, Tel. 810740
- Assemblies of God Church Tel. 632785
- St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation

- Tel. 637448
- De la Salle Church Tel. 661656
- Terraneta Church Tel. 622466
- Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
- Anglican Church Tel. 652826
- Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
- Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
- St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
- Armenian International Church Tel. 827126
- Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 834328
- German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457
- The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
- Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691
- The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295
- English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Stable weather conditions will prevail with temperatures rising slightly. It will be relatively cold, skies cloudy, and winds northerly to northeasterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- NIGHT DUTY
- AMMAN: Dr. Fayed Al Dabbas 759155
- Dr. Adnan Zaghloul 398140
- Dr. Mazen Al Nhal 830435
- Dr. Fakher Bilal 552335
- Firas pharmacy 661912
- Ferdows pharmacy 778336
- Al Asema pharmacy 637055
- Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
- Al Salam pharmacy 636730
- Yacoub pharmacy 644945
- Shmeissani pharmacy 637660
- Najib pharmacy 847632
- IRBID: Dr. Mazen Abu Baker 276852
- Al Quds pharmacy 611
- ZARQA: Dr. Mazen Al Safarini 985832
- Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

- Food Control Centre 637111

Min/Max temp.

- Amman 03/11
- Aqaba 08/18
- Deserts 02/13
- Jordan Valley 08/20

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 11, Aqaba 16 Humidity readings: Amman 77 per cent, Aqaba 65 per cent.

Civil Defence Department

- 661111
- Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
- Civil Defence Emergency 199
- Rescue Police 192 621111
- 637777
- Fire Brigade 617101
- Blood Bank 775121
- Highway Police 843402
- Traffic Police 896390
- Public Security Department 630321
- Hotel Complaints 605800
- Price Complaints 661176
- Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
- Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
- Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
- Overseas Calls 010230
- Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
- Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
- Jordan Television 773111
- Radio Jordan 774111
- Water Authority 680100
- Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
- Electric Power Company 636381
- RJ Flight Information 06-53200
- Queen Alia Intl. Airport 06-53200

HOSPITALS

- AMMAN: Hussein Medical Centre
- Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn 813813/32
- 542816
- Aldileh Maternity, J. Amn 642441/2
- Jabal Amman Maternity 642662
- Mallhas, J. Amman 636140
- Palestine, Shmeissani 607071
- Shmeissani Hospital 669131
- University Hospital 845845
- Al-Musaber Hospital 667227/9
- The Islamic, Abdali 666125/37
- Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
- Italian, Al-Muhajir 771013
- Al-Bashir, J. Ashraf 775111/26
- Army, Marks 891611/15
- Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
- Amal Hospital 674155
- The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199
- ZARQA: Zarqa Govt. Hospital 09/983323
- Zarqa National Hospital 09/900560
- Don Sina Hospital 09/986732
- Al Hilam Modern Hospital 09/990990
- IRBID: Princess Rasma Hospital 02/275555
- Greek Catholic Hospital 02/27275
- Ibn Al Nafees Hospital 02/247100
- AQABA: Princess Raza Hospital

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200 where it should always be verified. Information on other flights is obtained on telephone (08) 52700 or (08) 523250.

ARRIVALS

- Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
- 08:35 Damascus (RJ)
- 09:45 New Delhi (RJ)
- 09:55 Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
- 10:05 Beirut (RJ)
- 10:30 Colombo (RJ)
- 14:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
- 16:20 Cairo (RJ)
- 17:40 London, Beirut (RJ)
- 19:35 Vienna (RJ)
- 04:00 Jeddah (add) (RJ)
- 05:35 Bangkok (add) (RJ)
- Other Flights
- 12:40 Muscat, Abu Dhabi (GF)
- 15:05 Vienna (OS)
- 18:15 Dubai, Damascus (EK)
- 21:00 Paris, Damascus (AF)
- 22:20 Larnaca (CY)
- 22:25 Beirut (ME)
- 22:35 Cairo (MS)
- 23:40 Amsterdam, Beirut (KL)
- 04:35 Rome (AZ)

DEPARTURES

- Royal Wings (RW) Flights
- 09:20 Aqaba (RW)
- 18:55 Sharm Al Sheikh (RW)
- Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
- 06:20 Beirut (RJ)
- 09:45 Jakarta (add) (RJ)
- 11:05 Vienna (RJ)
- 11:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
- 11:50 Paris, Brussels (RJ)
- 12:00 Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
- 12:15 London (RJ)
- 12:15 Cairo (RJ)
- 20:00 Bombay (RJ)
- 20:05 Riyadh, Dhahran (RJ)
- 20:15 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
- 20:20 Larnaca (RJ)
- 20:30 Jeddah (RJ)
- 21:00 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
- 23:00 Jeddah (add) (RJ)

Other Flights

- 00:15 Damascus, Amsterdam (KL)
- 03:00 Beirut, Athens (OA)
- 07:00 Beirut (ME)
- 13:30 Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (GF)
- 15:50 Vienna (OS)
- 19:15 Dubai (EK)
- 23:10 Larnaca (CY)
- 23:30 Cairo (MS)
- 23:55 Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (AF)
- 00:40 Amsterdam (KL)
- 04:35 Rome (AZ)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

- Dep. Amman 8:00 a.m. every Monday
- Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday
- Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
- Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

- Apple 700/500
- Banana 550/550
- Banana (imported) 900/700
- Cabbage 60/40
- Carrot 200/160
- Cauliflower 170/100
- Cucumber (large) 180/100
- Cucumber (small) 330/200
- Eggplant 150/100
- Fava beans 800/650
- Garlic 1100/850
- Grape fruit 150/80
- Lemon 360/250
- Marrow (large) 140/100
- Marrow (small) 220/180
- Onion (green) 180/100
- Onion (dry) 180/100
- Orange 550/400
- Peas 850/700
- Pepper (hot) 280/180
- Pepper (sweet) 280/180
- Potato 260/160
- Radish 130/100
- Spinach 230/150
- String beans 600/400
- Tomato 150/100

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AMMAN (J.T.) — was reported missing Public Security Department (PSD) at Mitwag result of a downpour caused flooding W and Thursday impacting the parts of the count. Reports in the Friday quoted PSD as saying that the old boy was in the of his father when which they were broke down Muwaqqar Valley.

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Minister, am

AMMAN (J.T.) — for mid-March, was Industry and Trade A Ragheb and Ms. Wic Italian deputy prime economic and trade r

Tour

By Francesca C Special to the Jour

AMMAN — Paul headline policies of Prime Minister B Netanyahu and be the drop in tourist registered in 1996 sector businesses trying to find new lar to overcome the. Describing 1996 year to "target" and disappointed expectations for t peace era, hotelier operators and inve taping all then n and market Jordan Medical and tourism as well as and eco-tourism J considers as the ke to boosting the industry. "The Israeli against South first and the su

Taleban strengthen positions at mouth of strategic valley

KABUL (AFP) — Afghanistan's Taleban Islamic militia was Friday consolidating its new frontline positions north of Kabul after ousting opposition troops from two key towns in the area, official sources said.

The Mujahideen of the Islamic army are strengthening their positions at the mouth of Panjshir (Valley) and have started clean-up operations in Gulbahr. Taleban-run Radio Shariat reported.

In a two-pronged offensive Thursday, Taleban troops seized the strategic towns of Jabul Siraj, 77 kilometres north of Kabul, and Gulbahr, 95 kilometres northeast of Kabul, dealing a severe blow to the opposition coalition.

The Taleban then advanced 15 kilometres northwards into the crucial Salang Valley, heading towards the northern field of warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum, one of the leading figures in the anti-Taleban coalition.

"The defeated enemies have lost their morale," Radio Shariat said, adding that 80 anti-Taleban troops were killed in the battle.

Apart from the strategic crucial towns, the Taleban also seized scores of precious tanks, armoured vehicles, weapons, prisoners and supplies from the fleeing troops of the anti-Taleban alliance, the report said.

The religious militia's fighters were Friday digging in at Gulbahr, which guards the mouth of the Panjshir Valley — the main stronghold of the ousted

Afghan government's top commander, Ahmad Shah Masood, sources said.

Taleban troops were preparing to launch a house-to-house search of the newly captured towns to neutralise the possibility of local uprisings by ex-government loyalists, they added.

The militia, who captured the area with lightning speed last September after seizing Kabul, lost it again within days after failing to suppress local revolts or to consolidate their newly formed positions.

Witnesses said the Taleban appeared satisfied with their battlefield gains this time and did not seem to be keen to advance deeper into the narrow and snow-covered opposition-held valleys near the towns, as they did after four months ago.

Local leaders in Gulbahr, taking advantage of the full moon, came out to greet their new rulers who looked nervous about being attacked from inside the newly captured villages.

A man who said he had been beaten by the religious militia wandered around the town with a gash in his head and a blood-stained face.

Meanwhile in Jabul Siraj, Taleban fighters were rumormongering around Mr. Masood's former guest house in the town looking for booty in his former headquarters, the sources said.

Radio Shariat said the retreating opposition troops had left behind 250 prisoners and "hundreds" of tanks, trucks, armoured vehicles, as well as a large quantity of ammunition. Journalists visiting the

area Thursday saw dozens of tanks and armoured vehicles mounted with anti-aircraft guns, trucks full of food and ammunition which had been captured by the Taleban.

The two victories allow the Taleban — who now control more than two-thirds of war-torn Afghanistan — access to the doorstep of the heavily-fortified Panjshir and to the crucial Salang Valley to the north.

Gulbahr was defended by Mr. Masood's ethnic Tajik soldiers while Jabul Siraj, located on the highway linking Kabul with the central Asian republics, was under the control of Gen. Dostum's Uzbek militia.

Both towns are strategically important and at the centre of a territorial tug-of-war between the fundamentalist Islamic militia and Mr. Masood's forces since they overran Kabul on Sept. 27.

The losses mean the opposition forces, have been flushed out of the southern edges of the Hindu Kush range, dealing them a severe military blow.

Reports said the morale of Mr. Masood's fighters had been sagging since they lost Charikar and Bagram Air Base.

Meanwhile, ousted Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani and Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar are in Iran for peace talks on Afghanistan, but their arch-rival, the Taleban Islamic militia, failed to attend, the Iranian news agency (IRNA) said.

Mr. Rabbani and Mr. Hekmatyar, whose government in Kabul was toppled by the

Taliban in September, arrived late Thursday and were greeted by Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati.

The leader of the pro-Iranian Hezb-e-Wahdat, Mohammad Akbari, and a representative from Uzbek warlord General Dostum, are also here for the talks to begin Saturday.

The Mujahideen groups sending representatives here have entered an alliance against the Taleban militia in a bid to take back their lost territory.

Sebatollah Mojadadi, the head of the interim government installed after the fall of the Soviet-backed regime in 1992, arrived Wednesday. Iran has also invited the Taleban and its main backer Pakistan to attend the negotiations aimed at forging a consensus to resolve the Afghan conflict.

IRNA said Thursday the Taleban had agreed to take part and its team was already on its way. But no one from the militia has arrived despite wide expectations among the officials to receive a Taleban delegation late Thursday.

Both the militia and Islamabad boycotted another peace conference on Afghanistan held here in October.

Shi'ite Muslim Iran is wary of the ultra-orthodox Sunni Muslim Taleban, which it describes as "fanatic", and continues to recognise Mr. Rabbani's government.

Tehran accuses Islamabad of aiding the Taleban in its crusade to control all of Afghanistan and set up a fundamentalist Islamic state, a charge denied by Pakistan.



German Vice Chancellor and Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel (left) shakes hands with Indian Foreign Minister Inder Kumar Gujral in New Delhi Thursday. Mr. Kinkel on an official visit to India, said he hoped more could be done to bring home a German tourist kidnapped 18 months ago in Kashmir (Reuters photo)

Bonn, Delhi call for end to U.N. 'bias'

NEW DELHI (AFP) — India and Germany Friday supported each other's bids to become permanent members to the United Nations Security Council and called for major reforms to the international body.

German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel told reporters here that Bonn and New Delhi believed the U.N. was hamstrung by a post-World War II bias.

"India and Germany are working at the same objective of reforming the U.N.," he said. "The Security Council is not a reflection of the present order but represents the world as it stood at the end of the war."

"India is entitled to claiming a seat. India is a candidate we would support (but) it is ultimately up to Asia to decide which country should represent it in the Security Council."

There are five permanent members in the Security Council — Britain, China, France, the United States and Russia.

There are 10 other rotating members. India's hopes of winning a non-permanent seat were foiled in October when Japan was elected ahead of it.

Mr. Kinkel said India's

opposition to a comprehensive test ban treaty last year had cost its U.N. ambitions dear.

"It would be wrong to deny that such a connection exists," he said. "We would like India to review its decision but we are not trying to preach."

"We respect that India can have a separate stand," Indian Foreign Minister Inder Kumar Gujral backed Mr. Kinkel by saying: "We both agreed that there is a need to reform the U.N. to reflect contemporary realities."

"We would like to see Germany permanently in the Security Council. A few World War II, some countries were discriminated against."

"Germany was made a victim. Japan was made a victim and the developing world was made a victim. Some countries made first-class citizens of themselves."

Mr. Kinkel also said Germany would support Indian participation in the second summit of the Asia-Europe meeting to be held in London later this year. India was not invited to the inaugural conference of the new trade grouping last

March.

"India ought to be part of the negotiations. India, China and Japan are the three major Asian countries," he said. "It is not acceptable that 950 million people are being excluded from the dialogue."

Mr. Kinkel also invited India to bilateral talks on global security, adding: "I would like to discuss technological hazards and how to avoid them. Think of Chernobyl and the safety of nuclear power plants. These are cross-country issues."

The German minister, who arrived here Thursday at the head of a large trade delegation for a three-day visit, also discussed trade ties and Kashmir.

"We believe that tension should be defused in the region," he said. "We believe that bilateral talks between India and Pakistan should be resumed. The logic of insurgency should be countered with the logic of dialogue."

A Muslim separatist campaign against Indian rule in Kashmir has cost some 17,000 lives since 1989. Pakistan also claims the territory.

China crackdown on H. Kong civil rights sparks protests

HONG KONG (R) — Hong Kong's democracy movement Friday likened Beijing's plans to curb civil liberties in the territory to the brutal purges of China's radical 1966-76 Cultural Revolution.

The pro-democracy camp staged a small but noisy protest Friday morning at the office of post-colonial leader Tung Chee-hwa, who will succeed British Governor Chris Patten after the handover at midnight on June 30.

"Protect freedom of assembly. Protect freedom of association," they shouted. "Human rights cannot be infringed upon."

A handful wore tall hats and bung labels around their necks, harking back to the Cultural Revolution when those who were politically persecuted were forced to wear dunce caps and hang boards around their necks with their names crossed out. They were paraded through the streets and beaten. Many died.

Pro-democracy activists are campaigning against plans to scrap or amend 25 Hong Kong laws, some of them crucial to civil liberties, on July 1.

Laws facing the axe include parts of the Bill of Rights and laws allowing freedom of assembly and association.

The Hong Kong group called for an all-night sit-down protest outside China's de facto embassy, the Xinhua News Agency branch office, opposite the Happy Valley Race Course. Other protests were planned for Sunday.

"I don't think we can be masters of our own house," Yeung Sum, deputy leader of the Democratic Party, told reporters when asked what the latest developments boded for the autonomy that China has promised Hong Kong after the handover.

"The Chinese Communist Party is master of the house, and Mr. Tung is the servant of the Chinese Communist Party," he said.

Democratic Party leader Martin Lee was due to set off on an eight-nation tour of Europe Sunday to lobby for support for human rights, freedom and democracy in post-handover Hong Kong.

The reduction of civil liberties was proposed by a China-controlled committee

last Sunday and would be implemented by a provisional legislature that China is installing in July to replace the elected Legislative Council.

The provisional body was to convene for its first sitting across the border in the Chinese city of Shenzhen Saturday, when it is to elect its president and set rules of procedure.

Britain is handing Hong Kong back to China after more than 150 years of colonial rule, under a 1984 treaty in which China promised to preserve the territory's capitalist system and free way of life for a further half century.

Hong Kong's leading English-language newspaper, the South China Morning Post, voiced concern that the changes would scrap all habeas corpus law that curbs police rights to detain people.

"It prevents people from being arbitrarily arrested and held without trial, or detained without good reason," the newspaper said. "Habeas corpus is one of the greatest safeguards to individual liberty in the canon of law."

China denounces Dalai Lama for spreading 'lies' about Tibet overseas

BEIJING (AFP) — China Friday renewed pressure on exiled Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, accusing him of lying about its rule in the Himalayan region during his travels last year.

The attack, in a commentary carried by the official China Daily, also targeted a chorus of "biased" Western media, which it said had promoted false information originating from the spiritual

leader.

In his 1996 travels, the Dalai Lama "showed up in Denmark, Germany, Australia and South Africa under all kinds of excuses, trying to convince the world with his groundless 'bad news' about Tibet and win sympathy," it said.

"Some biased Western media have joined the anti-China chorus by promoting the 'bad news' ... but those people who have some

basic knowledge about Tibet will not be fooled by lies and fabrications," said the commentary, which was also published in full by the official Xinhua News Agency.

"Prejudiced Western media" have supported the Dalai Lama's allegations of cultural genocide in Tibet by reporting that Chinese were pulling down buildings in Lhasa's historic old city, it said.

Japan criticises Russia over oil spill response

TOKYO (AFP) — Heavy oil from a Russian tanker reached another Japanese prefecture on the Sea of Japan coast Friday as a Japanese minister expressed "regret" over Russia's slow response to the environmental disaster.

Oil from the tanker Nakhodka was found Friday at Nezuakaseki, at the border of Yamagata and Niigata prefectures, nearly 500 kilometres northeast from where the tanker sank on Jan. 2. Japanese Coast Guard officials said.

Transport Minister Makoto Koga expressed "regret" over Russia's slow response at a news conference Friday, and said the ministry has set up a special committee to investigate the cause of the tanker accident, ministry officials said.

He said the ministry had proposed to Russia through the Foreign Ministry to conduct a joint investigation.

"It would be impermissible if the Russian government does not cooperate with investigation by our country, which suffered damages," he was reported as saying.

Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto told a parliamentary session that Tokyo had requested Russia's "appropriate handling" of the accident via the Russian embassy in Tokyo and officials in Moscow.

"The government, through diplomatic channels, has been seeking the Russian side's cooperation for preventing a further oil spill, thorough investigation on the accident's cause, measures to prevent a recurrence, and compensation of damage."

"We will continue to ask the Russian side to cooperate in tackling these issues," Mr. Hashimoto said.

"The government will also examine how Japan can cooperate with neighbouring countries (on marine accidents)," he said.

Mr. Hashimoto noted that Japan was working towards hosting a conference on pollution in the Sea of Japan in mid-1997 by inviting China, Russia and South Korea.

Thousands of tonnes of oil have leaked from the tanker, ruining fishery resources and causing other environmental damage along the Sea of Japan coast.

"We held talks Monday and Tuesday with Russian experts in Tokyo, but it became clear that they did not have the authority over inter-governmental cooperation," a Transport Ministry official said.

"Internationally, when an accident like this happens, Russia should take the lead in investigation. But we are not yet in a stage to officially hold a joint investigation. So we decided to set up a committee."

Oil from the 13,157-tonne Nakhodka, which broke into two in a storm and sank in the Sea of Japan on Jan. 2, has already hit nine prefectures — Yamagata, Tottori, Shimane, Hyogo, Kyoto, Fukuoka, Ishikawa, Toyama and Niigata.

The tanker was carrying 17,100 tonnes of fuel oil when it sank while on its way from China to the Russian Far East peninsula of Kamchatka.

Rough weather continued to disrupt work to drain oil from the tanker's bow, which has run aground off Mikuni in Fukui prefecture, some 350 kilometres northwest of Tokyo.

Aichi Bank Ltd., a regional bank based in central Japan, donated 1,600 pairs of raincoats to disaster headquarters to help clean up the oil.

Chechenya hopes elections will consolidate peace

GROZNY, Russia (AFP) — Chechens are expected to choose between their top wartime general and a radical young guerrilla commander in presidential elections Monday which are hoped will consolidate the peace process.

No matter who wins, Moscow is sure to face a leader determined to complete Chechenya's de facto independence — the five main candidates led the 21-month war to drive Russian troops out of the tiny Muslim Caucasus republic.

But how Chechen-Russian relations develop will largely depend on the struggle between the two very different front-runners.

Leading is Aslan Maskhadov, the silver-haired guerrilla general who masterminded Chechen strategy against the far more numerous and powerfully armed Russian army.

Mr. Maskhadov, 45, is also Moscow's choice. A skillful but diplomatic negotiator who was a colonel

in the Soviet army, he signed the accord ending the war with the Kremlin security chief Alexander Lebed on Aug. 31, 1996.

Crucially for future peace in Chechenya, he is ready to keep doors open to the minority who opposed fighting to defend the republic's unilateral independence and collaborated with the Russian authorities.

Behind Mr. Maskhadov and many believe closing in, is Moscow's and the collaborators' nightmare — a battle for Commander Shamil Basayev.

His many exploits against the Russians include penetrating with 150 men into the southern Russian town of Budennovsk in June 1995, taking 1,500 hostages and forcing the Kremlin to begin peace talks, a pause which saved the hard pressed Chechens from defeat.

Unlike the more reticent Maskhadov, Commander Basayev, 32, has campaigned furiously

Appealing to the thousands of fighters and the deeply Islamic character of the independence movement, his main slogan is: "There is no power but Allah, there is no power except for his power, there is no law except for his law."

Like a traditional Chechen warlord, he travels from village to village in a convoy which includes flashy Mercedes, battle-scarred jeeps and the U.S. army's lumbering Humvee all-terrain vehicle.

But proving a born politician, he has moved away from the purely military image and now dons a smart overcoat and talks about liberalising the economy at rallies.

In this way, Commander Basayev has succeeded in widening his electorate from the fighters to ordinary people who see him as the only man capable of cracking down on poverty, kidnappings, hijackings and other crimes.

S. Korea reopens door to investment in North

SEOUL (R) — South Korea opened the door for domestic companies to invest in rival North Korea Friday for the first time since a submarine incursion shut off all contact between the two sides.

The unification ministry said it had given approval to seven firms to open talks with North Koreans to develop joint projects ranging from garment making to soft drinks.

All contacts were frozen after a North Korean Shark-class submarine dropped 26 intruders on a southern beach last September.

Pyeonggang issued a rare apology last month for the incident, prompting new progress towards peace talks between the two Koreas, the United States and China.

This week, the South Korean Red Cross said it would resume aid shipments to North Korea and the first consignment of flour and socks would be despatched this month.

The seven firms include Lotte Group, LG International Corp, Shin Won Corp, Korea Green Cross Corp, Taechang Co. Ltd and Dong Hae Trading Co.

To initiate talks, South Korean firms usually must meet North Koreans in third countries, such as China, because direct travel is restricted.

The only South Korean firm allowed a permanent presence in North Korea is the giant Daewoo Group. It runs a joint venture textile factory.

But company executives and government officials cautioned that any improvement in economic cooperation would be difficult until overall Korean ties improved, and they ruled out any immediate rush of investment to the North.

Seoul first allowed business links with the North in the late 1980s in the hope contact could thaw decades of hostility.

But he also said he believed the effort was an obvious attempt by the front's members to "topple the CPP."

Khmer Rouge says it wants to take part in local elections

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — The run-up to local elections in Cambodia took a new twist Friday as the outlawed Khmer Rouge said it wants to enter the race and co-Premier Hun Sen ruled out joining a new political alliance.

In a radio broadcast monitored in Bangkok, a Khmer Rouge spokesman said the rebel group supported the holding of free and democratic elections in 1997 and 1998 and could consider taking part in the polls.

"The spokesman said that it was necessary," the Khmer Rouge would "be ready to prepare a plan and programme to participate in regional elections in 1997 in order to take part in the destiny of the Khmer nation and people."

Meanwhile, second Prime Minister Hun Sen said his Cambodian People's Party (CPP) would not jump aboard an alliance being formed by his chief rivals in the coalition government.

the Royalist FUNCINPEC Party.

"We are not going to join with any front," Mr. Hun Sen told reporters at the opening of a CPP congress. "We will also not join any front, but we will cooperate with any political party that wants us to."

Mr. Hun Sen's rejection came a day after first Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh, the president of FUNCINPEC, confirmed the creation of a front, which he said was really patriotic.

Tension between the CPP and FUNCINPEC, former battlefield enemies who are now the main partners in the coalition government, has increased in recent months to the point where armed clashes have broken out in the northwest.

The prince said the alliance's draft charter had already been agreed to by his own party, the long-ruling opposition Khmer

Nation Party (KNP) and the Democratic National Union Movement (DNUM) — a breakaway Khmer Rouge faction.

Two other groups, a wing of the Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party and the Khmer Neutral Party, were reviewing the charter and the prince said he expected a positive reply from both.

In rejecting the offer to join the new alliance, Mr. Hun Sen said the CPP would continue to work together in the government and that his party would not oppose the creation of the front.

"It is good for them because it is their political right," he said. "I respect their right but I also request them to respect our rights in making alliances with other parties."

But he also said he believed the effort was an obvious attempt by the front's members to "topple the CPP."

Japan criticises Russia over oil spill response

OSAKA (AP) — Japan's foreign ministry on Friday criticized Russia for its slow response to an oil spill in the Sea of Okhotsk, near the Japanese coast.

The ministry said it was disappointed that the Russian government had not taken more effective measures to contain the spill, which began on January 12.

The spill, involving the tanker *Exxon Valdez*, has caused significant environmental damage and the release of thousands of tons of oil into the sea.

The ministry said it was urging the Russian government to take more effective measures to contain the spill and to provide more information about the situation.

U.S. soft-pedals on U.N. condemnation of China

BRUSSELS (AFP) — The United States is soft-pedalling on efforts to get China's human rights abuses condemned by the United Nations in a bid to secure concessions from Beijing on the rights of political prisoners.

Washington's approach is outlined in a confidential diplomatic telegram sent this week to the 15 member states of the European Union (EU), a copy of which was seen by AFP.

The document indicates that Washington is willing to jointly sponsor a critical resolution at the U.N. Human Rights Commission's annual meeting in Geneva, March 10-April 18, unless China's rights performance improves.

"We are continuing to talk with the Chinese about what meaningful concrete steps they might take to avoid confrontation in Geneva," it states.

In an indication of the kind of moves Washington is seeking, the document states that U.S. contacts with China have focused on the release of political prisoners needing medical treatment and a resumption of discussions with the International Red Cross on prison visits.

Crucially however, the United States fails to set a deadline for when it will conclude that Beijing is not going to deliver and begin lobbying other states represented on the U.N. commission to back a resolution which would underline international disapproval of China's crackdown on dissidents.

Human rights watchdog organisations fear that unless the European Union and the United States begin putting pressure on African and Asian states well in advance of the March meeting, there is little prospect of the resolution mustering the required majority in the 53-member commission.

China, which successfully headed off a critical resolution in Geneva last year, has already embarked on its own campaign to prevent any embarrassing criticism of its rights record, warning that supporters of the resolution could see their trade and investment interests in the country's booming free enterprise zones suffer.

The importance of joint EU-U.S. action to counteract this is underlined in the American message. "If we are to proceed, an important piece of our lobbying strategy should be joint démarches by co-sponsors to other commission members," it states.

But even if the United States seeks to push ahead with this approach, the EU will not now be able to come on board until late February at the earliest after failing Thursday in its third attempt to agree a common strategy.

In a meeting of the human rights working group, made up of senior officials from the 15 EU states, France and Italy maintained their veto on a confrontation with China in Geneva.

The EU will not now finalise its position until foreign ministers meet next on Feb. 24, less than three weeks before the Geneva talks are due to open.

Clinton upbeat on U.N. debt

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton promised to pay off hefty U.S. debts to the United Nations Thursday and in return Secretary-General Kofi Annan pledged that the world body would carry out wide-ranging reforms.

"Simply put, what the United Nations wants is what the U.S. also wants — a reformed United Nations that is effective, efficient, leaner and relevant to the tasks that member states want to set for us," he said.

The United States legally owes the world body \$1.3 billion, but the computation in Washington is \$500 million less because of unilateral deductions by Congress over the years, especially since Republicans came to power in 1994.

Mr. Annan was backed strongly by the Clinton administration when he was elected to succeed Dr. Gbali, who had been vilified by conservatives in Congress for his independence and as a block to fundamental reforms.

Mr. Annan also made some headway in a meeting with more than a dozen members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, headed by Senator Jesse Helms, a longtime foe of the United Nations.

In a statement welcoming Mr. Annan, Sen. Helms told him that if his reforms were piecemeal "you will have a very difficult time convincing Congress to send more American tax dollars to the U.N." "So, Mr. Annan, the ball is in your court."

Sen. Helms said he planned to introduce legislation setting benchmarks — or conditions — for reform before any funds could be paid.

U.N. officials said Mr. Annan and Sen. Helms agreed to have their staffs meet soon to discuss legislation the committee was drawing up.

But despite the cooperation, unilateral conditions imposed on 185 member states belonging to the United Nations may meet tough resistance, particularly the European Union countries and Japan who pay for most of the world body.

Most Republican leaders have expressed a willingness to pay off the debt but several have attached conditions that appear beyond the power of any U.N. chief to deliver.

New York Republican Benjamin Gilman, chairman of the House International Relations Committee, told Mr. Annan Wednesday U.S. dues should be cut from 25 per cent to 20 per cent of the U.N. regular budget, which is calculated by members' wealth.

Mr. Annan, however, in comments earlier in the day warned that reform could not be accomplished on a "shoestring budget."

Mr. Annan said he sensed a "new beginning" in relations with Washington. He said it was symbolic that he was Mr. Clinton's first prominent visitor since the president's second-term inauguration Monday.



New United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan (left) speaks at the White House after meeting President Clinton Thursday (Reuters photo)

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WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton promised to pay off hefty U.S. debts to the United Nations Thursday and in return Secretary-General Kofi Annan pledged that the world body would carry out wide-ranging reforms.

"Simply put, what the United Nations wants is what the U.S. also wants — a reformed United Nations that is effective, efficient, leaner and relevant to the tasks that member states want to set for us," he said.

The United States legally owes the world body \$1.3 billion, but the computation in Washington is \$500 million less because of unilateral deductions by Congress over the years, especially since Republicans came to power in 1994.

Mr. Annan was backed strongly by the Clinton administration when he was elected to succeed Dr. Gbali, who had been vilified by conservatives in Congress for his independence and as a block to fundamental reforms.

Mr. Annan also made some headway in a meeting with more than a dozen members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, headed by Senator Jesse Helms, a longtime foe of the United Nations.

In a statement welcoming Mr. Annan, Sen. Helms told him that if his reforms were piecemeal "you will have a very difficult time convincing Congress to send more American tax dollars to the U.N." "So, Mr. Annan, the ball is in your court."

Sen. Helms said he planned to introduce legislation setting benchmarks — or conditions — for reform before any funds could be paid.

U.N. officials said Mr. Annan and Sen. Helms agreed to have their staffs meet soon to discuss legislation the committee was drawing up.

But despite the cooperation, unilateral conditions imposed on 185 member states belonging to the United Nations may meet tough resistance, particularly the European Union countries and Japan who pay for most of the world body.

Most Republican leaders have expressed a willingness to pay off the debt but several have attached conditions that appear beyond the power of any U.N. chief to deliver.

New York Republican Benjamin Gilman, chairman of the House International Relations Committee, told Mr. Annan Wednesday U.S. dues should be cut from 25 per cent to 20 per cent of the U.N. regular budget, which is calculated by members' wealth.

Mr. Annan, however, in comments earlier in the day warned that reform could not be accomplished on a "shoestring budget."

Mr. Annan said he sensed a "new beginning" in relations with Washington. He said it was symbolic that he was Mr. Clinton's first prominent visitor since the president's second-term inauguration Monday.

Bulgarian talks collapse almost as soon as they begin

SOFIA (AFP) — Talks between Bulgaria's ruling Socialists and opposition leaders aimed at defusing the country's political crisis ended in failure Friday, almost as soon as they had begun, both sides said.

"Our discussion produced no result and we see no reason to continue the contacts," Ivan Kostov, head of the Union of Democratic Forces (UDF), which has spearheaded mass street protests aimed at forcing the Socialists to accept early elections, told the press after the meeting.

The meeting was chaired by Petar Stoyanov, the new centre-right president.

Socialist Party Chairman Georgy Parvanov said he hoped the talks, the first between the two sides under presidential auspices since the crisis erupted at the end of last year, would continue.

Mr. Parvanov said his party was opposed to the dissolution of the current parliament, but supported the formation of a government of experts in the framework of the current parliament which would adopt a specific programme and enjoy wide political support.

He did not clarify whether the government would be led by a Socialist prime minister.

The UDF has previously made clear it will accept nothing short of new elections.

Socialist leader Zhan Videnov resigned last December amid public anger over Bulgaria's economic decline, and his government later followed suit.

The Socialists have continued to insist, however, that they wish to form a new cabinet, sparking mass rallies by the opposition to push calls for the polls, not currently due until the end of 1998, to be brought forward to March.

Mr. Stoyanov, who formally took office Wednesday, has so far failed to defuse the crisis.

After separate talks with the two sides, Mr. Stoyanov said Thursday that he would ask the Socialist Party's candidate, Nikolai Dobrev, to form a new government.

Mr. Stoyanov has backed opposition calls for early elections, but is bound by the constitution to appoint the candidate chosen by the Socialists, who have a majority in parliament, and thus has little room to manoeuvre.

The UDF responded by threatening mass strikes.

Public transport and railway workers as well as air traffic controllers have already vowed in recent days to strike to ward off a Socialist government, while unions have been reporting daily one-hour work stoppages throughout the country since Jan. 3, generally denied by the government.

Mr. Kostov has also asked all parties represented in parliament to reject the formation of a new government.

If the candidate of the biggest parliamentary group fails to form a government within a week, or if parliament rejects his choice, Mr. Stoyanov will have to ask the second biggest party and failing that the third.

If the third attempt fails, the constitution calls for parliament to be dissolved and for the president to appoint an interim government to organise new elections within three months.

Algerian terror wave death toll tops 200

ALGIERS (AP) — An armed group attacked a farm on the southern edge of the capital overnight and slit the throats of 15 people, informed sources said Friday, putting a terror wave death toll over 200.

The latest violence came hours before President Liamine Zeroual was to make a speech on nationwide radio and television at 8 p.m. (1900 GMT) Friday. Mr. Zeroual was expected to say whether he still planned legislative elections by June.

Ten women and two children were among the 15 killed by the unidentified group overnight Thursday, the sources said on condition of anonymity.

There was no claim of responsibility, but suspicion fell on Muslim militants waging a five-year-old insurgency that has left more than 60,000 dead.

The overnight attack brought to 210 the number of people killed since the militants launched an wave of car-bombings, massacres and other attacks during the Holy Month of Ramadan, which began Jan. 10. Five hundred others have been wounded, and most of the victims have been civilians.

The militants seek to undermine efforts by Mr. Zeroual's military-backed government to organise legislative elections by mid-year. Mr. Zeroual's constitutional reform approved in a disputed referendum in November has outlawed religious-based parties the militants support.

In another massacre Thursday, an armed group slit the throats of 26 people in Benramdane, a village 25 kilometres south of Algiers. Four members of a policeman's family were slain in the same fashion at their home in Baraki, a suburb southeast of the capital, family members said. They spoke on condition of anonymity.

On Thursday evening, the mayor of Bachdjarrh, a suburb south of Algiers, was shot to death, his family said. They asked that his name not be released.

The Baraki and Bachdjarrh suburbs were considered Islamic strongholds two years ago, but repeated operations by security forces were believed to have forced out the militants, and the areas had been considered relatively safe from violence.

In the village of Benramdane, a government-backed "self-defence" group has been active, according to inhabitants.

These groups have become an important part of the government's effort to crush the militants. Organised in 1994, the groups have about 200,000 members, compared to 105,000 troops in Algeria's army.

They now have become targets of the militants' attacks.

On Wednesday night, a fifth car-bomb in four days killed 10 people and wounded 30 outside a meeting place for militia groups in Boufarik, 40 kilometres south of Algiers, residents said.

Algerian opposition groups criticised the government Thursday for its silence on the wave of violence.

Government-controlled media have only briefly mentioned the attacks, and officials have been completely silent.

Even the National Liberation Front, the former ruling party that backs the regime, has called on the state to "assume its responsibilities."

In Algiers Thursday, young men stood watch, set up barricades and checked pedestrians with large packages in a citizens' effort to stave off future attacks.

It's the politicians "that put this country where it is," said Said Mehail, a 24-year-old vegetable seller in Algiers, his eyes strained from a night of keeping vigil.

"They can just stay at home, protected by their walls and their bodyguards," said his friend Krimo, 22 and unemployed.

The Islamic insurgency began after the government cancelled January 1992 parliamentary elections the Islamic Salvation Front was expected to win on voter discontent with corruption and 25 per cent unemployment in the petroleum-rich nation.

The militants seek to establish a state based on strict Koranic law.

S. Korean strike leaders to leave cathedral

SEOUL (R) — South Korea's strike leaders said they would leave Seoul's Myongdong Cathedral Friday after spending almost a month in a makeshift tent on the church grounds directing strikes against a new labour law.

Bae Bom-Shik, deputy president of the outlawed Korean Confederation of Trade Unions, told Reuters the union leaders planned to pack up the tent during the day.

"We will leave Myongdong Cathedral today. Details will be announced later," he said.

The decision follows a dramatic concession by President Kim Young-Sam suspending arrest warrants against confederation head Kwon Young-Kil and other unionists.

As part of his climbdown, Mr. Kim also agreed Tuesday to reopen parliamentary debate over the controversial law, which sparked more than three weeks of wildcat stoppages that hurt the economy.

Factories and businesses operated normally Thursday.

The move by confederation heads to abandon their strike headquarters would help ease almost a month of tension between the government and union leaders over the law, which allows companies to sack workers and replace strikers.

The confederation leaders pitched their headquarters tent on the icy grounds of the cathedral on the same day the ruling New Korea Party rammed the labour bill through parliament in a dawn session on Dec. 26 while opposition deputies slept.

Mr. Kim's sudden reversal came after the confederation decided to call off indefinite stoppages and limit industrial action to one day each week, Wednesday.

Mr. Kwon however has since said the confederation would continue protests until the government scrapped the law — an action that Mr. Kim has said would go against the constitution.

On Wednesday, police allowed Mr. Kwon to lead a protest march through Seoul streets.

But Labour Minister Jin Nyeum said Thursday the government would no longer tolerate illegal strikes, and the ruling party blasted the opposition for rejecting the offer to reopen parliamentary debate on the new law.

Mr. Jin did not specify what measures would be taken against strikers.

Zaire presses counter-offensive against rebels

KISANGANI (AFP) — The Zairean army was set Friday to press on with a counter-offensive against rebels in the east of the country, aiming to cut the rebel troops off from their rear bases, reliable sources said.

The army launched the long-expected attacks on the Tutsi-led rebels Thursday.

A Defence Ministry statement said 100 rebel soldiers had been killed in clashes well into territory seized by the Tutsi-led insurgents late last year, near the town of Walikale, a major road junction leading to Goma in the east and Bukavu.

Reliable sources also said Zairean soldiers had recaptured the tiny cross-roads town of Nya-Nya on the road from Kisangani to Bunia, a diamond-mining town held by rebels, and the town of Mambasa, performing a pincer movement aimed at cutting off the rebels in Bunia.

Military sources said the army used helicopters and small fighter aircraft in the attacks which they said were aimed at cutting the rebels' supply routes.

Zairean forces on the eastern front have recently been equipped with Saab-Marchetti Italian jet aircraft and Russian-built Mi-24 helicopter gunships of the type used extensively by Soviet forces in Afghanistan.

The rebels — mainly Tutsis and Mai-Mai groups and allegedly backed by Uganda and Rwanda — seized a large swathe of territory in eastern Zaire from the Zairean army and allied Rwandan Hutu militia fighters late last year.

Hundreds of thousands of refugees who had been held by the Rwandan Hutu militia returned to Rwanda last year following the fighting in eastern Zaire. But the UNHCR said in Nairobi Thursday that between 200,000 and 300,000 refugees remain in the region, mostly in the Lubutu and Shabunda regions.

And it warned they risk being caught in the middle of the new fighting.

Reporters in Kisangani have witnessed white mercenaries apparently working with the Zairean army.

According to the French daily Liberation, Friday, a Belgian called Christian Tavernier is leading a force of 280 mercenaries.

The paper said Mr. Tavernier, who is described as a friend of notorious French mercenary Bob Denard, had been in touch with advisers of French President Jacques Chirac and was in permanent contact with Zairean President Mobutu Sese Seko, now convalescing on the French Riviera.

The report said Mr. Tavernier's mercenary force, said to include Serbs, Croats, Russians, Poles, Belgians, Italians and "a significant number of French" soldiers of fortune, was financed by money from Kuwait.

Zaire has accused the country's eastern neighbours, Rwanda and Uganda, of supporting the rebels.

Rwanda admits to some links with the rebels but denies active support while Uganda admits it has sent troops into Zaire, but says the operations were aimed at hitting anti-Ugandan rebels based in Zairean territory.

The Zairean Defence Ministry statement Thursday said its operation to wrest back control of territory lost to the insurgents was a "just, legitimate war in defence of the integrity of the territory" of Zaire.

"Zairean forces are determined to carry out this war to the end and to reclaim territory at any price," Defence Minister Lukulia Bolongo was quoted in the statement as saying.

The scar of Ulster's 'bloody Sunday' still open

LONDON (AFP) — Twenty five years after the British army shot dead 14 civilians here, the scar left by "bloody Sunday" is still kept open by renewed calls for an apology from the British government and alleged fresh evidence of the soldiers' guilt.

Many Catholics in this northwestern city are preparing to commemorate in the days ahead the deaths of their co-religionists on Jan. 30, 1972, one of the darkest days of northern Ireland's bitter history.

An illegal civil rights march was drawing to a close when paratroopers opened fire on the crowd after they had tried to make arrests. The troops maintained they themselves had first come under fire, but a subsequent inquiry led by Lord Chief Justice Widgery failed to establish that any of the victims were armed, nor that the soldiers had been shot at.

The killings inflamed nationalist opinion on both sides of the Irish border, and two days later an angry mob burned down the British embassy in Dublin, the capital of the predominantly Catholic Irish republic.

The British government made out-of-court settlements with next of kin, but neither it nor the army have ever apologised for the deaths.

Relatives of the dead men last week called for a fresh inquiry into the killings after alleged new evidence was reported in the British and Irish media.

It had always been assumed the victims were hit from ground level as they took part in the civil rights march, but according to the new evidence, three were shot from above by soldiers on duty on the city's historic walls.

The soldiers claim they were fired on, according to a local radio Ham who overheard transmissions between soldiers on duty and whose recording has been handed over to journalists.

A tape of the radio conversations of the soldiers on duty on the town walls was ruled inadmissible as evidence at the Widgery inquiry.

A new book on the killings out this month by Don Mullan, an eyewitness of the events, also claims three of the victims were shot from the town walls.

Mr. Mullan backs up his claims with medical evidence which he says shows the trajectory line of the bullets in each case was downwards at a 45 degree angle.

His book also quotes official documents which add weight to his belief that successive governments covered up the full facts of the shootings.

The British government has however flatly rejected the calls for a fresh inquiry.

A Northern Ireland office spokesman said last week: "The events of Jan. 30, 1972 were fully investigated by the Widgery tribunal. There are no plans to set up a further inquiry."

He added that "anyone with new evidence should report it" to the Ulster police.

But the opposition Labour Party is showing hesitant support for a new probe. Eric Illsley, the party's spokesman on the Northern Ireland economy, said Monday he would "look at the report of Lord Widgery to see whether there is evidence available, evidence which perhaps was not available many years ago, to see whether another inquiry will be required."

Amnesty criticises U.N. over African refugee crisis

NAIROBI (AFP) — Amnesty International Friday criticised the United Nations refugee agency as failing to prevent forced repatriation of refugees in Africa's Great Lakes region.

The criticism of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) follows a massacre by Burundian soldiers earlier this month of more than 100 Burundian refugees reportedly expelled from Tanzania.

"The UNHCR and the international community have often failed to make immediate and unequivocal protests against such expulsions," an Amnesty International statement received here said.

The statement, prepared by an Amnesty delegation visiting Tanzania, also accused the international community of assuming that the refugees crisis in Central Africa was over.

"The reality is completely different (...) the crisis is in danger of worsening. The situation remains perilous with refugees being attacked in their camps, and some being attacked and killed if they returned home," the statement quoted Flora MacDonald, the head of the Amnesty delegation in Tanzania as saying.

Tanzania and other countries in the region like Zaire host hundreds of thousands of Rwandan Hutus who fled their country during the 1994 ethnic massacres there.

Many returned from Zaire late last year when local Tutsi rebels routed Rwandan Hutu militia fighters who had controlled the refugees' camps.

But the UNHCR said in Nairobi Thursday that between 200,000 and 300,000 refugees remain in eastern Zaire and that they risk being caught up in new fighting as the Zairean army presses on offensive to win back rebel-held territory.

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Ties from past to future

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein's talks with King Fahd in Riyadh after his trip to Mecca to perform the Umra are timely and propitious. Jordanian-Saudi relations have returned to normal after overcoming the tremendous strains caused by the Gulf crisis and war.

The current phase calls for more coordination and cooperation between the two key Arab states especially on the peace process with which we should be and are highly concerned. The recent breakthrough on Hebron between Israel and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), which was brokered to a considerable extent by the personal intervention of King Hussein at the eleventh hour, has ushered in a new era in regional ties and interaction which many observers now regard as an important step towards making real progress on all other tracks. Saudi Arabia's full understanding and appreciation of Jordan's efforts to bring about a comprehensive and lasting Middle East peace is definitely a crucial factor in trying to achieve that goal.

As King Hussein said on the eve of his pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi-Jordanian relations are both "strong and historic." The historic dimension of these ties are borne out by shared views on regional as well as bilateral issues, despite the differences that surfaced on ways to reverse the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Joint efforts should continue and deepen on the basis of mutual respect and appreciation of the sometimes different priorities and approaches that the two countries might have. Jordan looks as always for even better relations with Saudi Arabia. Those ties should be driven by a set of fundamentals that should ensure their continuation.

In this vein, the volume of trade and commerce between the two countries can grow to new and higher levels. But just as Jordan can benefit from the opening of the Saudi market to its goods, services and labour, Saudi Arabia can tap on Jordan's skilled and experienced manpower and take advantage of the competitive price and quality of Jordanian products.

Economic and pragmatic considerations will soon push the whole Arab region towards building more solid economic structures. The two neighbouring states are in a unique position to set an example which other Arab countries can follow as they pursue mutually rewarding economic relations which will, by necessity, extend to cooperation on energy, the environment, borders and security. These are issues which can only be addressed in a regional framework. Jordan and Saudi Arabia can take the lead in identifying and constructing that framework. Their weight, presence and respect in the region will ensure that their example is followed by other Arab states.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Ra'i daily described a recent visit of Jordanian ministers to Baghdad and their conclusion of agreements on trade and oil shipments between Iraq and Jordan as reflecting the strong ties binding the two brotherly countries. Regardless of the dark patches that marred bilateral relations in the past, Amman and Baghdad will remain committed to brotherly ties and to the pursuit of joint action for the benefit of the two peoples, said a columnist writing under the pen name Meem. President Saddam Hussein's meeting with the Jordanian ministers and his announcement that Iraq will provide additional quantities of oil to Jordan free of cost, in addition to the conclusion of the oil and trade protocols, provided sufficient proof of the strong and ever growing relations between the two sides, added the writer. The Jordanians and the Iraqis, he said, are bound by geographic and historic brotherly relations and Jordan serves as Iraq's gate to the Arab World while Iraq serves as Jordan's strategic depth, protecting its interests, said the writer. He said the two countries' recent agreements served as additional milestones on the road towards economic integration.

COMMENTING ON Israeli leaders' statements on their desire to reach a peace treaty with Syria, Al Ra'i said in an editorial that the peace process can be revived if Israel is willing to reach an accord with Syria on the full implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338. The paper stressed that Israel must be made to realise that it has obligations and commitments to make if it is really and genuinely inclined towards peace with Damascus. Israel should first stop issuing hostile statements against Syria, claiming that the occupied Syrian heights are Israeli land, and the Israeli government must heed the resolutions of the Cairo Arab summit which demanded Israel's full withdrawal from the Syrian heights as a prerequisite for peace with Damascus, said the paper. It said that in addition, the United States, which is sponsoring the peace process, should prove its neutrality if it is to be a partner in the peacemaking process. The paper stressed that mere statements by Israeli leaders about peace can by no means achieve that goal without practical steps taken in that direction.

Jordanian Perspective

'If U.S. has a long-term vision, we can look forward to its forceful approach to the dynamics of the Mideast peace process'

By Dr. Musa Kellani

THE 99-0 vote with which the U.S. Senate confirmed Madeleine Albright as secretary of state in the second-term Clinton cabinet on Wednesday speaks volumes for the reputation she enjoys as perhaps the toughest American diplomat when it comes to defending U.S. interests around the globe.

Having been sworn in and assumed office 24 hours later, Ms. Albright automatically became part of the political life in the Middle East, given the close engagement of the Clinton administration in the Arab-Israeli peace process.

We do not know yet whether Ms. Albright has any new ideas to advance the Middle East peace process; if she does, then it would not be long before we can see their reflections.

We in Jordan, and elsewhere in the Arab World, were more used to seeing the tough side of Ms. Albright, during her tenure as Washington's permanent delegate to the United Nations, particularly her approach when it came to dealing with Iraq.

As such, she has taken over the State Department with the reputation, as many see it, of adopting an anti-Arab approach and many also naturally expect her to adopt a position that would not serve the Arab cause in the Middle East peace process.

But it is not necessarily true, just as the unfounded rumours that Ms. Albright is Jewish and, as such, she would be serving Israeli interests in the peace process.

For starters, let us take note that Ms. Albright's tough talking on Iraq and her consistent attacks on Saddam Hussein were in fact softer when compared with some of the Arab delegates at the United Nations.

Ms. Albright did not invent stories of her own that the Iraqi regime was building palaces after palaces when the people of Iraq were starving; she was drawing from information provided to her, accurate or otherwise, by her country's government and its intelligence machinery.

Ms. Albright was not drawing from her imagination that the human rights of the people of Iraq were being violated; such accounts were given to her, again accurate or otherwise, by the administration.

As such, an assumption that Ms. Albright has her own axe to grind against Iraq and Saddam Hussein would be completely misplaced.

The same also applies to her opposition to a second term for Egypt's Boutros Ghali as U.N. secretary general. It would be simply naive to believe that Ms. Albright led

a lone crusade against Mr. Ghali; she was told by Washington to veto a second term for the Egyptian diplomat.

So, where does a picture of Ms. Albright running a personal anti-Arab vendetta come from?

She was simply following orders from Washington. Of course the choice of words was hers, but that only proves one thing: Ms. Albright has a strong vocabulary that includes tough idioms and phrases and she drew from it extensively while doing her job as her country's representative, entrusted with conveying her country's ideas and positions to the world body.

For us in Jordan, the picture is largely clear: Ms. Albright's mandate as secretary of state is to defend American strategic political and economic interests and if she serves that objective in all honesty and dedication, then it is good news. For defending American strategic political and economic interests simply means taking a more objective position on the Middle East peace process, which indeed implies cutting down Israel to size.

"The U.S., the self-professed leader of the free world and champion of human rights and fundamental freedoms, is being forced to put up an armoured shield around it rather than keep its door open for the oppressed."

There is little doubt that the anti-U.S. sentiments that we see in many parts of the Arab World could be attributed directly to Washington's consistent political, military, material and moral support for Israel. It is also clear that such support has eroded respect for the U.S. as a honest mediator in the effort to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict.

By extension, that could also explain the many anti-U.S. attacks that we have seen since the 1980s in the Middle East region, including the two bombings in Saudi Arabia in the last nine months.

That leads us to observe the high state of alert and secu-

city that surrounds every American diplomatic mission and installation around the world, that clearly shows that a fortress mentality is setting in the American mind.

Indeed that is an irony. The U.S., the self-professed leader of the free world and champion of human rights and fundamental freedoms, is being forced to put up an armoured shield around it rather than keep its door open for the oppressed.

That is where the flaws and contradictions in the American policy are exposed. And it certainly does not give much reason for Americans to be proud of their country's record as the champion of the downtrodden.

Of course we cannot expect Ms. Albright to bring about sweeping changes to that policy. But her very mandate to defend her country's strategic interests around the world implies that she has to strive to shed the image acquired by Washington as the "guardian angel of Israel." Definitely that would mean telling Israel, regardless of who is in power there, that it cannot continue to occupy other people's land, flout international legitimacy and challenge world opinion by denying the legitimate territorial and political rights of others.

Washington's oft-heard argument that it could not simply pressure Israel into doing anything does not hold water. Israel does not have any legitimate rights to hold on to Arab territories. The American argument that Israel, as a sovereign, independent country, is free to do what protects its interests applies only to those lands and rights that the international community has accorded it. Definitely, the Palestinian territories, the Golan Heights and the so-called "security zone" in south Lebanon are not included in what the international community recognises as Israel's land and rights.

If anything, by continuing its role as patron of Israel, the U.S. is simply tarnishing its own image around the world.

In any context, maintaining the "strategic relationship" with Israel might suit the U.S. in the short term, say a decade or two, but it certainly does not serve Washington's medium- or long-term interests.

So, the key question is: Is Ms. Albright speaking with a long-term vision of what it implies when she says she would make the "American people proud" of her? If she does, and also means it, then we can definitely look forward to a forceful American approach to the dynamics of the Middle East peace process.

THE WEEK IN PRINT

Conflict in Sudan is also about influence in the Nile, Red Sea region

REVIEWED BY
 ELIA NASRALLAH

AMONG THE topics covered prominently in the local press in the past week was the conflict in Sudan and its repercussions in the Arab World. Also given prominence were the ongoing massacres in Algeria, domestic affairs and the situation in the Middle East following Israel's redeployment of its forces in the Hebron region.

The present crisis in Sudan dates back to 1989 when the military assumed power in the country, banning all opposition political groups except for the Islamists, said Mahmoud Rimawi, a writer for Al Ra'i daily.

This policy has created internal tension because one party was allowed to flourish, at the expense of others which ran underground, said the writer.

This policy has antagonised Egypt which has accused Sudan of harbouring Islamist groups who have been active against the Egyptian government and other countries neighbouring Sudan, he said.

Now that the conflict has widened, with backing from the rebels from neighbouring Eritrea and Ethiopia, Egypt, along with the other concerned Arab countries, should intervene and prevent the disintegration of Sudan and bring about reconciliation among that country's various warring groups, demanded the writer.

A writer for Al Dustour accused Israel of being behind the conflict in Sudan, saying that the Jewish state, backed by the United States, is trying to impose its influence on the countries around the Red Sea and make them besiege Sudan and Egypt.

Yasser Zaareh said that at least 800 Israeli military experts are organising the aggression, in collaboration with Ethiopia and Uganda, with financing from Washington.

He said that Israel and the United States aim at imposing their domination on the River Nile sources,

weaken Egypt and Sudan and impose their will on the eastern parts of Africa.

The writer said that recent reports from France have revealed that the Israelis and the Americans have been providing weapons to the countries neighbouring Sudan to launch their aggression on that Arab country in order to achieve the U.S.-Zionist objectives.

Sultan Hattab, a writer for Al Ra'i, said the escalation of conflict in the Horn of Africa calls for an immediate intervention on the part of the Arab League.

Egypt, the largest Arab country with special responsibilities in the African region, should step in to stop the war and enable the warring factions to achieve peace and reconciliation, said the writer.

Sudan is an Arab country facing aggression from its neighbours and under no pretext should the Arab League refrain from undertaking a decisive action to put an end to the war and protect national interests, he said.

The writer said the Arab countries should not remain passive and watch Sudan face a tragedy similar to that which had befallen Iraq, Taher Adwan, a writer for Al Dustour, described the conflict in Sudan as an American war on that country and part of American plots to impose sanctions on the Sudanese.

The Americans want to impose their hegemony on the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea, converting it into an Israeli-American lake, and so they resorted to arming Sudan's neighbours to launch war on the Arab state, charged the writer.

He said the plot is also directed against Egypt, because U.S.-Israeli domination of the sources of the River Nile means control over the destiny of Egypt and Sudan.

What Sudan needs now is not statements of condemnation of the aggression but rather arms shipments to Khartoum to enable the Sudanese to repel aggression and protect the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity, said the

writer.

Reflecting on the situation in Algeria, following a spate of bombings that killed and injured hundreds of innocent civilians during the holy month of Ramadan, a writer for Al Ra'i said the crimes against the people in that country can by no means be justified or condoned, whatever their sources or perpetrators might be.

Mahmoud Rimawi said that no power struggle can justify the murder of innocent women and children and the massacre of people with no affiliation to political parties, the government or the armed forces.

The writer said that the crimes against humanity, which are committed almost daily in Algeria, can achieve nothing for the opposition groups which are behind the attacks and which have proved their brutality and barbaric nature.

The writer said that the Algerians are passing through ordeal and sufferings because an opposition group finds that bloodshed is a way to achieve its selfish objectives.

The Algerian opposition groups' claims that the Algerian armed forces and government are behind the brutal massacres committed in the country can deceive nobody, said Saleh Qallab, a writer for Al Dustour.

It is unreasonable for anyone in his right mind to believe these claims simply because the government cannot commit such atrocities which would bring its demise, stressed Saleh Qallab.

The writer said that the armed forces, which fought the French for years to achieve independence in Algeria, can by no means be responsible for the massacre of women and children.

These crimes are committed by extremist groups who have lost their sense of direction and are acting as agents in the pay of foreign powers bent on ruining Algeria, charged the writer.

He said that the groups behind the murder of

women, children and innocent civilians have only one objective in mind: to assume power in the country at all cost.

Taher Adwan said it is too late for the present parliament to enact a new elections law, to replace the one-person, one-vote system, because parliament is now in its last session.

Because the government has so far failed to present to the house a new draft elections law, and is unlikely to do so during the present session, at least the present parliament can introduce amendments to the existing law, he demanded.

The one-person, one-vote system is undemocratic and so is any extension of the present parliament which was elected on the strength of the existing voting system, said the writer.

As the government seems to be determined to carry out the parliamentary elections this year on the basis of the one-person, one-vote system, he said, the only way for parliament to ensure somewhat fair elections lies in the introduction of amendments to the present law.

In the face of worldwide support for the Israeli-Palestinian accord on the redeployment of Israeli forces in the Hebron area, only Syria, backed by extremist Palestinian groups, stood as opponent to the deal, said Fahed Faneh, a writer for Al Ra'i.

Had the Palestinians and Israelis not reached this accord, the whole Middle East peace process could have been ruined, added the writer.

His Majesty King Hussein's efforts to break the deadlock have succeeded in reviving the peace process which, said the writer, has proved to be stronger than the extremists' will to ruin it.

The writer said that the peace process could be delayed by Israel for some time, but it can by no means be destroyed since the peace camp has proved to be stronger and more determined to pursue endeavours to achieve the aspired objective.

Uncertainty stalks Chechnya on eve of elections

GROZNY, Russia (R) — A light flickers in the darkness at the end of a muddy track, hesitant but unmistakable — the only neon for miles around.

This is Grozny's sauna — a tiny oasis of relative comfort and calm in the desolate, war-torn Chechen capital.

"Customers still come, though we get fewer now because people don't have much money. More would come if we could guarantee the water supply," said Timur Ibrahimov, who runs the small but cosy bath-house on the outskirts of the city.

Nearly five months after a peace deal between Russia and Chechnya's pro-independence rebels halted fierce fighting in the southern region, water and electricity supplies remain erratic and most of the local economy is in ruins.

"Some people come here because they don't have water at home," said Mr. Ibrahimov.

With most cafes, restaurants and theatres nothing more than piles of rubble, the sauna is one of the few places where young Chechens can go to relax.

It does not make much of a profit but covers its running costs — no mean business feat by current Chechen standards. Elsewhere the picture is a lot gloomier.

"Everything has been destroyed. Communications, basic infrastructure — it is all in ruins," said Tim Guldimann, of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which is helping to organise elections in Chechnya on Jan. 27.

Few telephones work, most factories and farms are at a standstill and local people put unemployment at 80 to 90 per cent. There are no official statistics for the jobless.

The few with regular jobs say they have not been paid for months — sometimes for nearly a year. People survive by trading — buying cheaply and selling at a small premium.

The Chechens have always been good at trading. Look at the bazaar, it is the only place where the economy is still alive," said Aslan Dukayev, a professor at Grozny University.

Most of the government's tax revenues come from there," said Mr. Dukayev, who also has not been paid for months.

But even in the bustling, well-stocked bazaar, traders say business has been much slower since the fighting stopped. During the 21-month conflict Russian troops and federal government money helped keep the local economy afloat.

Now the Russians have gone as part of the peace deal and uncertainty is paralysing economic activity.

"Whoever gets elected (as president), people must be paid or else things will never get better," said one woman selling pens and stationery in the bazaar.

The political outlook also remains unclear. Chechnya barely has a functioning government and eyes are fixed on the election, which will choose a new president and parliament.

Chechnya's very status is ambiguous. The five main presidential candidates regard Chechen independence as a fait accompli, despite the peace deal's requirement that the region's final political status be deferred for five years.

The Kremlin failed to defeat the rebels militarily, but Moscow still hopes to persuade Chechnya to stay within the Russian Federation, possibly with financial inducements.

The election campaign is full of anti-Moscow rhetoric, but more thoughtful Chechens say the successful candidate will have to show flexibility in his dealings with the Russians.

"Only Russian money can restart the economy in the absence of willing foreign investors," said Mr. Dukayev. "Russia will use the economy as a lever."

Another key issue is what to do with the thousands of still armed but unemployed fighters, many of them too young to have lived as adults in a normal peaceful society.

"There is a lost generation here due to the war. It is going to be very hard integrating them into civil society. They are looking for a new identity," said the OSCE's Guldimann.

He said failure to stabilise the economy and provide new incentives for these men could drive them towards more radical ideologies, including Islamic fundamentalism.

Rebel commander Shamil Basayev, now one of the frontrunners in the presidential race, has accused Chechnya's interim government of abandoning the independence fighters.

New
 Liby
 with

UNITED NATIONS
 — Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi thumbed his nose at the United Nations and at Washington last week when a Libyan jet landed in Accra despite a U.N. air embargo on Libya. Tripoli's official agency JANA reported that a Libyan Air Force plane flew to Accra on Thursday. Tripoli in defiance of the U.N. air embargo imposed on Libya in April 1992. The news came just as a new U.N. chief, Annan of Ghana, met U.S. President Bill Clinton in Washington. The United States quickly called the flight a "serious violation" of the embargo. State Department spokesman, Nicholas B. Spillane, said: "We will pursue the matter in the U.N. Security Council and in the various committees at the United Nations," who added that Libya "ought to be" by U.N. Security Council resolutions.

U.S. as
 Saudi

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Janet Reno has hauled in investigation (FBI) of the statement that withholding crucial evidence of the deadly bombing last June.

"As Director Freeh said, Saudi government has with some very important information that we will use these issues, obtain the appropriate steps can be told a press briefing. The Mr. Freeh said Wednesday to provide information on our ability to make findings or to channel the investigation directions."

The two U.S. officials' shift in U.S. policy which praise for Saudi Arabia, those responsible for the military housing compound near Dhahran which killed. Asked if she thought hampering U.S. investigation, Mr. Reno said it was investigation to have found order to assess what taken."

U.S. officials quoted
 Fujimori
 as Lima

LIMA (Agencies) — Fujimori has vowed to bring down the Japanese group holding 7 Japanese ambassador's son once the crisis was over. "This is not going to go Fujimori said in La Paz, looking for the total end in the region," he said. Fujimori's Revolution (MRTA).

Speaking with reporters with Bolivian President Sanchez de Lozada, Mr. Fujimori would not let up in his fight against the armed rebel groups in Peru.

"There is no going back to hunt them down," he said. Mr. Fujimori's threatened police tactics over that have steadily tightened the defiant MRTA rebels.

On Thursday, four captured up one of the entrances and a small hole by service staff. Watched policemen, the labourers hour making wooden planks access points.

The action left open a that has been used by MRTA mediatons and freed captives. A police helicopter also mined and booby-trapped times.

The MRTA responded men's latest move on the using Mr. Fujimori as a "trigger on international opinion a "massacre" by the government.

"We have to stop the die not have to suffer five years," new MRTA communiqué. A second communiqué police activities were "p

Arab cash aid tops \$100 billion

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Financial aid provided by Saudi Arabia and other Arab oil producers has exceeded \$100 billion but the flow of assistance is still slowing down, an official report showed Thursday.

The assistance, mostly to fellow Arab countries and other developing nations, totalled around \$103 billion between 1970 and 1995, the Arab League said in its 1996 annual economic and social report.

Saudi Arabia emerged as the top donor, accounting for 64 per cent of the total Arab aid. About 16 per cent was provided by Kuwait, 11 per cent by the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and the rest by Iraq, Libya and Algeria.

In 1995, Arab aid stood at \$1.23 billion compared with nearly \$1.41 billion the previous year. Most of the funds were provided by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the UAE, which contributed nearly 45 per cent of the world's oil.

The 1995 aid was far lower than assistance provided during the oil boom of late 1970s and early 1980s, when it averaged more than \$7 billion a year, according to the report, carried by the official UAE news agency WAM.

"The Arab aid flow started to decline in the second half of the 1980s and continued its decline later because of a sharp drop in crude oil prices and growing political and economic needs by the donors," said the report.

It is to be released soon in full by the Abu Dhabi-based Arab Monetary Fund (AMF).

The report gave no breakdown but figures obtained from the AMF showed Arab financial assistance peaked at \$64.5 billion between 1975 and 1984. It plunged to around \$20.5 billion between 1985 and 1995.

There were no figures for 1996 but AMF sources said they expect the size of the aid to be equivalent to the 1995 level despite an increase of more than \$3 a barrel in oil prices last year.

They cited growing development commitments in donor nations, especially in the Gulf, where most countries are carrying out reforms to tackle persistent budget deficits and repair economic damage caused by the oil price decline.

The main beneficiaries of the Arab aid in the region were Egypt, Sudan, Yemen, Syria, Jordan and the Palestinians.

"You do not expect our countries to keep the same size of aid that they were providing during the oil boom," a UAE official said.

Despite the improvement in oil prices in the past two years, figures show that the GCC's oil revenues remained less than half their level in 1980, when they stood at nearly \$180 billion.

"Another factor is the growing development needs due to the large increase in the population," the official added.

The decline in Gulf aid to poor Arab states has hurt their economies as they heavily depended on the cash assistance and remittances from their expatriates in the Gulf.

But it was also a key factor that has forced those countries to embark on reforms to heal their economic woes.

"The Arab aid is still considered high in international standards if they are compared to the gross domestic product," the Arab economic report said, Arab donors have continued providing aid although they are classified as developing nations and their main source of income, oil, is a depletable source.

"Between 1990 and 1994, they offered around four per cent of their total oil revenues in loans and other development aid," the report added.

The report showed financial aid provided to Arab states by all sources totalled \$55.4 billion between 1988 and 1994. The energy sector had the lion's share of 28 per cent, followed by communications, industry and farming.

Dollar breaks above 120 yen in Tokyo trade

TOKYO (AFP) — The dollar broke above 120 yen in late afternoon trading here Friday to reach a 47-month high, driven in part by an apparent lack of concern by Japan towards a weaker yen, dealers said.

The dollar hit 120.04 yen at 3:58 p.m. (0658 GMT) and reached a high of 120.20 yen before falling back to trade at 119.94-97 yen at 5 p.m. (0800 GMT), well clear of its intraday low of 118.32.

Dealers said remarks by senior Japanese government officials the weaker yen would not have an adverse impact on the economy and was in fact lending assistance to the recovery drove the dollar upwards.

A dealer at a major Japanese bank denied a report that the Bank of Japan had stepped into the market after the dollar broke 120 yen to sell dollars for yen for the first time in four-and-a-half years.

"I don't think the Bank of Japan is in the market," he said of an uncorroborated report by Japan Broadcasting Corp. The central bank was in the market.

But another dealer said: "The Bank of Japan could have intervened — there's no way to really tell — because I felt selling pressure on the dollar when it topped 120."

The last time the dollar traded above the 120 yen level was Feb. 18, 1993, sliding towards a record low 79.75 on April 19, 1995.

Dealers said comments

by Bank of Japan Research and Statistics Bureau Director General Masayuki Matsushima and Economic Planning Agency Vice Minister Shinpei Nukaya earlier appeared to support a strong dollar.

Mr. Matsushima told reporters during a briefing on the central bank's quarterly economic report that the yen's decline had helped the economy extend its modest growth and was expected to help sustain growth.

"The yen's fall, so far, from the 80-yen level has been a plus for the Japanese economy and it is expected to continue to work as a positive factor for growth," Mr. Matsushima said.

He said the yen's decline had helped to stem sustained falls in net exports and helped accelerate the pace of growth of domestic exports.

Mr. Nukaya earlier told a regular news conference that domestic prices had yet to show upward pressure following the yen's slide against the dollar, echoing comments of recent days there had been no adverse economic impact.

Tatsuya Hyodo, assistant general manager at Sanwa Bank's treasury department, said that fundamental differences between the economies of the United States and Japan were underpinning the dollar's gains.

"Since the run of the year, expectations that a gap between U.S. and

Japanese interest rates will widen has been growing," Mr. Hyodo said.

"Speculators may be satisfied with the achievement of the 120 level, but I think the dollar will remain strong for a while," he said.

The U.S. and Japanese economies are as different as heaven and hell.

"Japanese investors are pinning no hope on stocks, and are fed up with bond buying. So they're investing in the United States and fund flows overseas are accelerating," Mr. Hyodo said.

A dealer from a European bank who asked not to be named said: "The dollar's strength has been supported by fundamental differences between the U.S. and Japanese economies."

"Another factor is the big gap between American and Japanese interest rates," he said. "Japanese rates are staying at low levels because of gloomy prospects for the future. On the other hand, U.S. interest rates may rise, or at least will not fall."

The dealer said that the 120 yen level was "a major point of psychological resistance" and the dollar "may rise further toward 125 yen if it clearly climbs above 120."

The Bank of Japan's Matsushima declined to elaborate on the level at which the yen's decline was positive for the economy, but said: "One thing that is clear is that the private sector has not factored in the yen's level at 119 yen in their business plans."

REUTERS

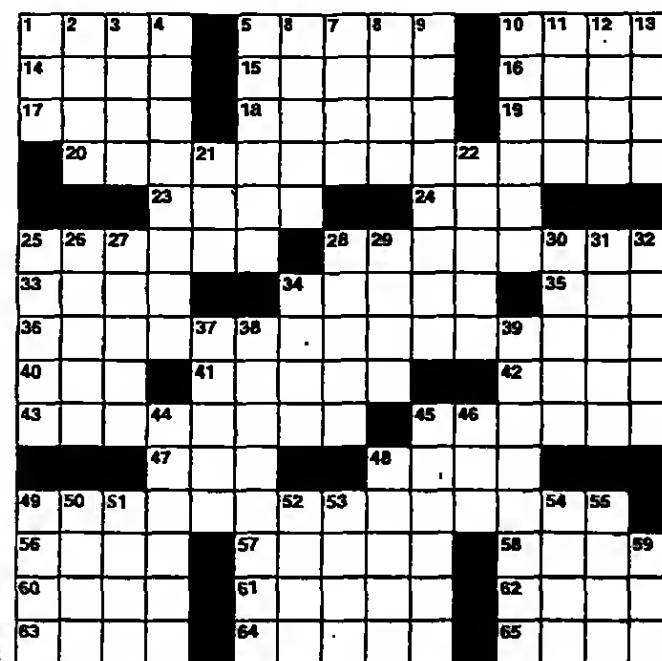
REUTERS

The Business of Information

THE Daily Crossword

ACROSS

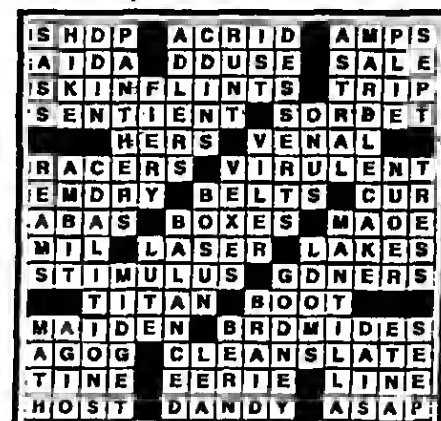
- 1 Jumble
- 5 Strikebreakers
- 10 Unadorned
- 14 Off-shore
- 15 French landscape painter
- 16 Nichols' hero
- 17 Pruniparty
- 18 — acid
- 19 Horse color
- 20 Star of 48A
- 23 Spike and Bruce
- 24 Shoe width
- 25 Mushroom
- 28 Deadlock
- 33 Copical
- 34 NY county
- 35 TV actor, Gulager
- 36 Resident of Cabot Cove
- 40 Cinnabar, e.g.
- 41 Vanna of TV
- 42 Film spool
- 43 Unfair treatments
- 45 Turns inside out
- 47 Swiss canton
- 48 First man
- 49 Long-running TV series
- 56 Leaf-stem angle
- 57 Shearer, dancing actress
- 58 Blue color
- 60 Easy gait
- 61 Up and about
- 62 Inter —
- 63 Low card
- 64 — out (barely beat)
- 65 Gown material



by Bernice Gordon

DOWN

- 1 Possesses
- 2 The Charles' dog
- 3 Connery
- 4 They seek bargains
- 5 Climbs
- 6 States of unconsciousness
- 7 Seed cover
- 8 — hide
- 9 Very long time ago
- 10 Type of wire
- 11 Leigh Hunt character
- 12 Ananias
- 13 Gainsay
- 21 Conger
- 22 French lawmakers
- 25 Army officer
- 26 "Wozeck," e.g.
- 27 Baste again
- 28 Examines carefully
- 29 Enamelled metalware
- 30 Yellow pigment
- 31 Armada
- 32 Rails up
- 34 Fallow
- 37 "If — King" (old film)
- 38 Board V.I.P.
- 39 Old violins
- 44 A Moore
- 45 Name of many English kings
- 46 Different spelling; abbr.
- 48 High nest
- 49 Lager ingredient
- 50 Caesar's wife
- 51 Ready for the plucking
- 52 Fair
- 53 Successes
- 54 Bones of the ankle
- 55 Maleficent
- 59 Talk persistently



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Yassen for fashion factory continues its expansion

After many years of establishing his factory for fashion in Zarka's Free Zone, Mr. Mahmoud Yassen, the well-known Jordanian industrialist continues to expand his business inside and outside of Jordan.

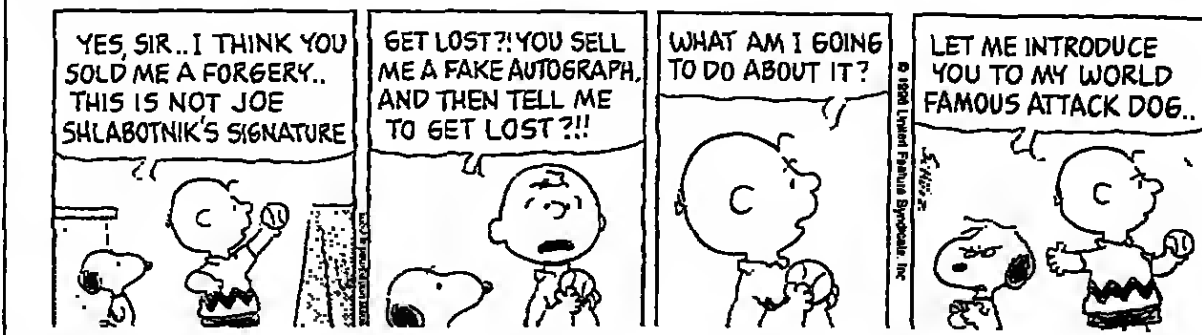
Recently, and after the successful opening of his showroom in Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.A. Mr. Yassen opened a showroom in Amman (Gardens St., Hilwat Al-Mansour Bldg.). Yassen factory produces men's, women's and children's clothes which are

famous of its quality, fit and efficiency. Men's suits, in particular, are made of American wool and silk. They are styled after European designs and manufactured under the supervision of highly experienced tailors.

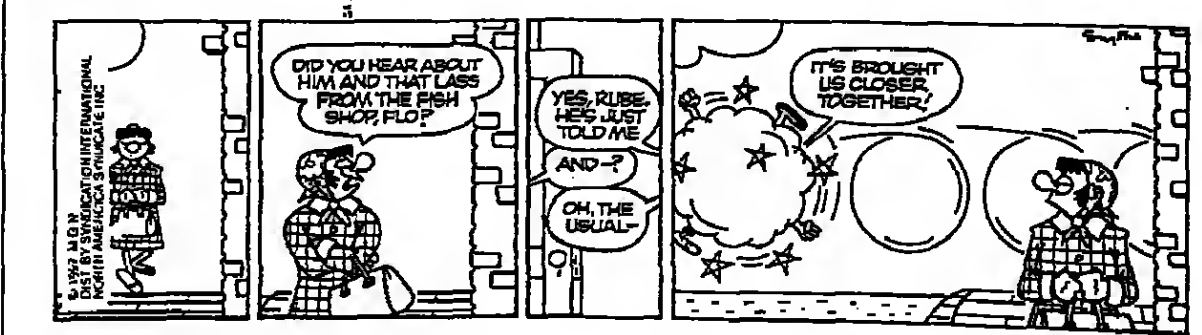
"Our products can compete easily with any imported clothes," Mr. Yassen said. "It's only that they are lower in prices, but also that they are, honestly speaking, better in quality," he added.

JORDAN TIMES
TEL:
684311 — 699634

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Cut down on tensions at career activities by getting your tasks done efficiently and pleasing fellow associates. Later this evening, finish some simplistic, and also quite pleasurable task which won't be too stressful.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Pursue your wishes this afternoon today, however, find some amusements with close friends — this evening. Watch your weight, since it could really affect your health. Drive carefully while on the highway.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You have several options today for gaining a personal wish, so consider your choice carefully. Be more independent and try not to ask favours of your friends or there could be difficulty arising in the days ahead.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Avoid any "flighty" company, this evening. Be with people who are more practical minded and know what they are doing. Plan today how to gain personal goals and thereby you can gain success in the days ahead.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Get to the core of any career activities you have to handle today which is important to your welfare. A smile will go along way if you deal with a superior. Relax and enjoy tonight, with your loved ones and prepare for the days ahead.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) New contacts should be greeted nicely today since they can be of help to you in the days ahead. Listen carefully to their views and use any suggestions made. Try to cut down pre-judgements to a minimum.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Give some thought to notices which need to be sent out today, and be sure they are accurate so that won't be any misunderstandings. Be careful of little annoyances later this evening when dealing with your mate.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Be sure you know what you will say today before having a discussion with someone whose ideas are radically different from your own. Take along a close friend for support and prevent any difficulties.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) If you're confused about the direction to take today, consult an expert for advice. Settle matters with a fellow associate in a friendly way to prevent any difficulty. If you put your two heads together, you'll win.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Don't let some unimportant person or matter distract you from seeking out an entertainment you enjoy. Be careful while driving on the highway today and later tonight and thereby avoid any accident.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) If you handle your duties wisely today, your kin will be most pleased and feel more secure about you in the days ahead. This is a good day to entertain at home, so invite some guests and enjoy their company.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You can benefit greatly from a new acquaintance who is quite popular, so be friendly. Handle any routines carefully later this evening, and avoid doing any damage while driving on the highway.

Birthstone of January: Garnet — Rose Quartz.

Major Currencies & Cross Rates Prices as at 24/01/97 21:33									
	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	FRF	ITL	ESP	YEN
US Dollar	1.8290	0.8148	1.4060	119.20	1.3482	1589.50	1.8285	5.4950	
DF Mark	0.8139	-	0.3772	0.6635	73.18	0.8278	975.15	1.1222	3.3727
GB Sterling	0.6255	2.6520	-	2.2900	194.10	2.1928	2588.12	2.9750	8.9420
CH Franc	0.7112	115.74	0.4367	-	84.76	0.9562	1128.81	130.11	3.9041
JP Yen	0.0084	136.50	0.5150	1.1785	-	1.1301	13.32	153.27	4.8044
CA Dollar	0.7417	1.2257	0.4526	1.0875	1.13	-	1194.00	1.3768	4.1345
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0242	0.3864	0.0884	1334.94	0.8479	-	-	11.50
NL Guilder	0.5469	89.07	0.3358	78.88	85.15	0.7369	888.82	-	3.0025
FR Franc	0.1620	0.2963	0.1118	25.5822	21.88	0.2453	33.27	33.2700	-

Energy		USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
Brent	23.55	23.75	-	-	-	-
W. Texas	23.95	23.80	-	-	-	-
Bony	23.55	23.75	-	-	-	-
Dubai	24.62	20.58	-	-	-	-
U.L. Gas	207.00	209.00	-	-	-	-

Mid-East Currencies						
SA Riyal	0.2687	0.4345	0.18397	0.37525	31.8177	-
AE Dirham	0.2724	0.44381	0.1875	0.38333	32.5024	-
KW Dinar	3.3140	5.39957	2.03749	4.662	395.413	-
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.32152	1.83079	3.73274	318.458	-
CY Pound	2.0357	3.3189	1.2515	2.8637	242.787	-

Metal Prices		USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
Gold (oz's)	352.8	353.1	-	-	-	-
Silver (oz's)	4.94	4.98	-	-	-	-
Platinum (oz's)	357.65	356.85	-	-	-	-
CU (3 Month)	1837	1640	-	-	-	-
CU (3 Month)	2243	2246	-	-	-	-
Zinc (3 Month)	1135	1138	-	-	-	-
Lead (3 Month)	698	700	-	-	-	-
NI (3 Month)	7270	7310	-	-	-	-

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)						
Period	1	3	6	9	12	Year
USD	5.37	5.58	5.52	5.45	5.78	-
GBP	6.12	6.25	6.56	6.38	6.75	-
JPY	0.50	0.29	0.32	0.31	0.53	-
DEM	2.91	3.03	3.03	2.91	3.08	-
FRF	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	-
CHF	1.58	1.58	1.53	1.62	1.86	-
ITL	7.27	7.08	6.77	6.53	6.36	-

Main Equity Indices						
Index	Value	Chg.	% Chg.	High	Low	Pr Ch.
New York	8708.41	-47.34	-0.7	8759.98	8676.47	8755.75
S&P 500	772.96	-4.8	-0.9	778.21	768.92	777.56
London	4218.6	-52.7	-1.23	4251.3	4215.7	4271.5
Tokyo	17689.36	-220.1	-1.23	17893.9	17541.2	17909.5
Paris	2430.34	-30.91	-1.26	2442.48	2422.8	2481.25
Frankfurt	2996.24	-35.22	-1.16	3006.76	2990.87	3033.48

Energy		USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
Coffee (lb's)	144.33	-	-	-	-	-
Cocoa (lb's)	1273	-	-	-	-	-
Sugar (lb's)	298.8	-	-	-	-	-
Wheat (lb's)	132	-	-	-	-	-
Soy (lb's)	22.7	-	-	-	-	-
Tea (lb's)	115	-	-	-	-	-
Barley (lb's)	2.15	-	-	-	-	-
Rice (lb's)	470	-	-	-	-	-

JOD Cross Rates			
Currency	Buy	Sell	
US Dollar	0.708	0.710	-
GB Sterling	1.15	1.1566	-
DE Mark	0.4314	0.4336	-
CH Franc	0.4951	0.4978	-
FR Franc	0.1378	0.1384	-
JP Yen	0.9333	0.9363	-
NI Guilder	0.3841	0.388	-
IT Lira	0.4428	0.445	-

*Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

Turnover

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Prices of turnover edged up a week at the stock market in traditionally low activity during the month of Ramadan, business mostly focused on blue chips, brokers Friday.

"There is not much opening in the market today," because investors are staying because it is the month of Ramadan," said a broker at the Amman Financial

Daily

Journal of news

Jordan National Bank

(TWO JORDANIAN) Bank and the Business today the first merger, bankers said.

The merger, with the name of the Jordanian National Bank, is the second largest

in the country, with a total of 11,442 million (\$1.1 billion) in assets, shareholders' equity, and deposits.

The Jordan National Bank, which was established in 1954, is a public company with 100 per cent of its shares owned by the government.

The bank's assets include land, buildings, and equipment, and its liabilities include deposits and loans. The bank's capital is \$1.1 billion, and its reserves are \$1.1 billion.

The bank's assets are divided into three main categories: fixed assets, current assets, and other assets. The bank's liabilities are divided into three main categories: deposits, loans, and other liabilities.

The bank's assets are divided into three main categories: fixed assets, current assets, and other assets. The bank's liabilities are divided into three main categories: deposits, loans, and other liabilities.

The bank's assets are divided

Business & Finance

Jordan Times, Saturday, January 25, 1997

Turnover, prices edge up at AFM

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Prices and turnover edged up this week at the stock market in traditionally low activities during the Holy Month of Ramadan, with business mostly focusing on blue chips, brokers said Friday.

"There is not much happening in the market these days because many investors are staying away because it is the month of Ramadan," said a broker at the Amman Financial

Market (AFM).

The weekly report of the AFM said turnover for the week ending Thursday was 4.1 million dinars, compared with the previous week's 2.3 million dinars.

The report said 3.2 million stocks changed hands during the week under 2,898 deals.

Daily average trading for the week was 820,000 dinars compared with the previous week's 460,000 dinars.

The official AFM share price index based on 60

major companies closed for the week at 154 points, up 0.79 points or 0.5 per cent from the week's opening of 153.21 points.

Sectoral indices showed industrials gaining by 2.2 per cent and insurance companies by 0.1 per cent while commercial banks and financial institutions dipped by 0.1 per cent and service sector firms shed 0.6 per cent.

Industrials accounted for 2.72 million dinars of the weekly turnover, followed by service sector companies with 750,000 dinars, commercial banks with 660,000 dinars and insurance companies with 3,000 dinars.

Stocks of 82 companies were traded during the week, with 40 of them closing with gains, 29 slipping and 13 unchanged.

Pearl Consulting, a private sector firm which maintains its own market indicators, said its general share price index closed after slipping 0.21 per cent during the week.

Sector indices maintained by Pearl showed that commercial banks and financial institutions dipped by 1.37 per cent and service sector shares by 0.21 per cent while industrials gained 0.73 per cent and insurance stock by 0.15 per cent.

Further split-ups by Pearl showed commercial banks losing 1.28 per cent, investment houses by 1.26 per cent and Islamic banks by 0.18 per cent while specialised credit institutions gained 0.86 per cent.

In the services sector, tourism establishments and hotels gained 0.79 per cent, transport companies 3.02 per cent, real estate firms 0.45 per cent and utilities in the education and related sectors 1.75 per cent. Losing in the services sector were energy companies, which dipped by 0.33 per cent, and press and publications companies, which shed 0.53 per cent.

Among industrials, Pearl indices showed mining companies gaining 2.07 per cent, construction firms 3.28 per cent, packing companies 0.44 per cent, pharmaceuticals 0.61 per cent, textiles 0.11 per cent and companies in the supply and consumption business 0.02 per cent.

Losing during the week in the industrial sector were chemical and petroleum companies with 0.74 per cent and engineering firms with a loss of 0.78 per cent.

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

Jordan National Bank, Business Bank to merge today

**TWO JORDANIAN banks, the Jordan National Bank and the Business Bank, will formally approve today the first merger in the country's banking history, bankers said Thursday.

The merger, with the new bank retaining the existing name of the Jordan National Bank, will create Jordan's second largest bank in terms of capitalisation.

Its JD42 million (\$59.3 million) capital is second to leading Arab Bank's JD44 million capital.

An extraordinary general assembly meeting of the two banks' shareholders is expected to approve today the recommendations reached by a committee of the two banks, which finalised evaluation of assets, shareholders' rights and stock evaluations.

"Effective Sunday 26, Business Bank will have ended as an independent bank and will be merged in Jordan National Bank," Abdul Rahman Toukan, general manager of the Jordan National Bank, told Reuters.

Mr. Toukan said that the merger will give the new entity more elbow room to expand in investment and commercial banking.

"Of course the larger capital will allow us to enter into more investment banking and comprehensive banking," he added.

The Jordan National Bank, which has four Lebanese branches, one in Cyprus and five branches in Palestinian self-rule areas, also saw the merger allowing for expansion abroad, Mr. Toukan said.

The two banks' boards agreed to a merger last June and their shareholders have since given approval to proceed. Cross ownership of above 20 per cent between their shareholders has aided the voluntary merger.

The committee's report put the total assets of the merged bank at JD630 million, which will put it fourth in rank among Jordan's 21 private banks after Arab Bank, Housing Bank and Islamic Bank.

Non-combined assets of Jordan National Bank stand at JD461.9 million and Business Bank's at JD167.1 million, according to a copy of the report obtained by Reuters.

The new bank's shareholders' rights will stand at JD67.8 million with total deposits of JD448.4 million and JD319.5 million of loans.

Under the asset evaluation, existing Jordan National Bank shareholders will own nearly 85 per cent of the new merged bank's capital of JD36 million. They will get an extra one and a quarter shares for every existing share they hold.

Business Bank shareholders will get one new share for every share in their dissolved bank, only 15 per cent of the combined capital which reflects dominance of their larger partner.

THE BETTER HALF

By Glasbergen

MY BOSS IS A JERK. BALLGAME TOMORROW. I'M GETTING TOO FAT. CAT BOX SMELLS BAD. WISH I HAD MORE MONEY. I'M HUNGRY.

"That's what I appreciate about you, Stanley—you're such a good listener!"

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

ZYUF

FATOO

TABBLE

NYLARX

You will be rich and famous \$100, please

GAZZING INTO A CRYSTAL BALL MADE HER THIS.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here: A

Yesterday's Jumble: ABIDE OODLY JANGLE SQUIRM Answer: What Mom did when he played with matches — SMOLDERED

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET														
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - JORDAN														
TELEPHONE 607171 / 607179														
ORGANIZED MARKET TRADING ACTIVITY FOR THE PERIOD (18/01/1997 - 22/01/1997)														
WEEKLY REPORT														
DURING THE LAST 3 WEEKS														
PRICE	LOW	COMPANY NAME	P/E	DIV	NO. OF CONTRACTS	NO. OF SHARES EXERCISED	VALUE TRADED JD	OPENING PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSING PRICE	CHANGE	AVERAGE PRICE	NO. OF TRADING DAYS
261.000	249.000	ARAB BANK	14.0	1.37	32	760	195195	259.00	259.00	256.00	256.25	- 2.75	256.022	5
2.600	2.320	BANK OF JORDAN	11.5	0.00	7	1435	4514	3.12	3.28	3.08	3.18	0.06	3.190	7
1.150	1.040	KID. EAST INV. BK.	76.2	0.00	153	202500	213540	1.17	1.19	1.12	1.16	0.04	1.153	20
2.200	2.250	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	5.3	5.93	23	2424	17665	2.20	2.22	2.18	2.21	0.03	2.216	5
4.820	4.600	THE HOUSING BK.	12.5	2.95	21	3897	18131	4.66	4.70	4.63	4.66	0.02	4.657	2
2.950	2.550	JOR. KUNJAT BANK	19.5	0.00	14	5364	35419	2.62	2.69	2.62	2.69	0.07	2.675	6
0.900	0.950	JOR. GULF BANK	6.8	7.22	35	91878	89040	0.95	0.98	0.96	0.97	0.03	0.969	8
3.070	2.680	ARAB JOR. INV. BK.	19.3	0.00	2	128	2402	3.68	3.60	3.52	3.60	0.08	3.595	2
3.770	3.600	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	18.1	0.00	31	16962	32555	3.70	3.76	3.72	3.75	0.02	3.710	2
2.450	1.380	UNION BK. DEV. INV.	104.0	0.00	8	1752	2592	1.45	1.45	1.43	1.45	-	1.444	2
2.350	3.650	JOR. INV. FID. BANK	39.5	0.00	2	128	459	7.70	3.60	3.60	3.60	0.10	3.595	2
3.800	1.730	SEIT. AL-NAB. (REITMA)	3.1	0.32	6	1200	1901	1.75	1.75	1.72	1.72	0.03	1.734	2
5.350	5.150	ARAB BANKING CO.	24.3	0.00	8	436	2574	5.15	5.15	5.12	5.12	0.03	5.135	2
3.320	1.230	WILADIA. INV. BK.	-	0.00	15	12016	15646	1.29	1.31	1.27	1.28	0.01	1.301	2
BANKS SECTOR														
1.960	1.890	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	5.5	10.31	3	1054	2016	1.93	1.94	1.90	1.94	0.02	1.933	3
INSURANCE SECTOR														
1.400	1.610	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	11.3	7.34	48	15959	26022	1.64	1.64	1.62	1.63	0.01	1.631	2
8.450	8.000	JOR. HOTEL TOURISM	17.3	1.99	3	45000	271250	8.00	8.25	8.25	8.25	0.25	8.250	2
6.000	6.000	VEHICLE. OWNERS FID.	33.3	5.56	2	700	4230	6.00	6.00	6.00	6.00	0.00	6.043	2
5.000	4.500	ARAB INTEL. HOTELS	13.4	2.92	3	916	4030	4.50	4.40	4.40	4.40	0.10	4.400	2
2.580	2.450	SHIPPING LINES	10.5	0.00	5	300	1750	2.45	2.50	2.50	2.50	0.05	2.502	2
2.260	1.140	BALU. PORTFOLIO	0.00	0.00	35	10915	13400	1.23	1.23	1.21	1.21	0.02	1.228	2
1.900	0.840	ARAB SECURITIES INV.	20.2	4.10	38	33915	34716	0.87	0.93	0.89	0.91	0.04	0.915	2
0.320	0.590	JORDAN INTEL. TRAD.	33.8	0.00	8	2560	7144	0.62	0.62	0.61	0.61	0.01	0.615	2
0.430	0.410	MACH. EXP. REPT. MAINT.	-	0.00	1	1000	900	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	-	0.450	1
1.980	7.980	ALARA	9.3	6.33	1	50	305	7.90	7.90	7.50	7.50	0.08	7.900	2
1.430	1.920	MID. EAST HOTELS	65.9	0.00	13	12550	19131	1.55	1.57	1.53	1.53	0.02	1.525	2
3.540	2.450	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	16.0	0.63	27	11287	40051	1.48	1.56	1.50	1.55	0.09	1.548	2
3.060	3.030	BAKRA EDUCATION	-	0.00	20	12315	25045	1.05	1.09	1.05	1.05	0.04	1.074	2
2.220	2.010	UNIFIED CO.	11.2	4.69	59	34450	18426	2.16	2.17	2.13	2.13	0.03	2.132	2
0.880	0.840	UNION LAUD DEV.	-	0.00	5	2000	1685	0.84	0.84	0.83	0.85	-	0.841	2
SERVICES SECTOR														
2.450	2.200	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	19.4	2.94	51	61768	209097	2.35	2.31	2.34	2.40	0.05	2.385	2
3.500	3.330	JOR. FERTILISER MINES	35.8	0.00	2	134	645	3.28	3.33	3.33	3.33	0.05	3.321	1
5.710	5.570	ARAB POTASH CO.	17.9	3.39	38	14432	84705	5.71	5.70	5.74	5.80	0.09	5.825	2
10.040	9.550	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.1	0.02	50	98827	98227	9.84	10.00	9.81	9.90	0.14	9.924	2
1.270	1.210	MOHSEN INDUSTRIES	54.4	0.00	5	800	985	1.20	1.24	1.23	1.23	0.03	1.231	2
2.740	2.420	INDUSTRIAL COMM. COR.	35.0	0.00	24	5077	13450	2.50	2.71	2.60	2.60	0.02	2.649	2
6.950	6.800	JOR. WOODSTOCK KILNS	8.9	3.60	2	138	1276	6.95	6.95	6.95	6.95	-	6.949	2
2.720	3.440	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	20.4	5.38	70	17854	60400	3.66	3.72	3.65	3.72	0.04	3.674	2
4.000	5.800	JOR. CEMENT IND.	8.2	0.19	6	500	3217	5.80	6.00	6.00	6.00	0.20	6.000	2
2.200	2.200	JORDAN BANK	12.0	0.00	2	278	417	2.20	2.22	2.22	2.22	0.02	2.213	1
1.450	1.580	JOR. PAPER MANUFACT.	8.8	7.45	35	4910	7739	1.41	1.62	1.60	1.61	0.01	1.609	2
8.400	8.100	ARAB CEMENT. OTHERS.	22.9	3.53	1	50	420	8.40	8.40	8.40	8.40	0.00	8.400	1
1.380	1.380	RAPHA INDUSTRIES	170.8	0.00	1	1000	1389	1.38	1.35	1.35	1.35	0.01	1.350	1
5.000	4.050	DAR ALAMAR DV. INV.	13.4	4.10	25	4976	24423	4.05	5.05	4.08	4.08	0.01	4.510	2
3.050	3.400	ARAB ALUM. IND.	9	0.00	9	3250	3174	3.40	3.40	3.40	3.40	0.00	3.420	2
0.450	0.580	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	-	0.00	40	51850	32337	0.61	0.61	0.62	0.62	0.01	0.624	1
1.220	1.120	ARAB PAPER COM. TRD.	8.2	0.56	122	112900	136113	1.17	1.23	1.16	1.21	0.04	1.204	2
1.270	1.270	NATIONAL STEEL IND.	-	0.00	6	33000	40509	1.27	1.23	1.23	1.23	0.04	1.230	2
0.720	0.600	NATIONAL IND.	-	0.00	75	65011	44310	0.70	0.70	0.67	0.67	0.03	0.682	2
1.150	1.030	INTERMED. PAPER. CHEN.	5.2	1.19	50	11550	10819	1.07	1.16	1.09	1.10	0.04	1.100	2
2.520	2.520	UNION CEMENT. IND.	69.0	0.00	1	243	461	2.52	2.78	2.64	2.64	0.29	2.728	2
4.200	3.910	ALADIM CO.	22.2	3.03	2	158710	427243	3.90	3.99	3.99	3.99	0.21	3.990	1
0.890	0.790	JOR. SULPHUR-CHEN.	-	0.00	11	4300	3501	0.79	0.82	0.80	0.82	0.03	0.815	2
1.500	1.310	ARAB FERTILISER CHEN.	27.5	0.00	167	62050	92776	1.40	1.52	1.45	1.47	0.01	1.495	2
1.130	1.130	KAWTHER INVEST.	39.5	5.45	1	100	112	1.12	1.10	1.10	1.10	0.02	1.100	2
1.800	1.990	UNIV. BOOK. DES.	5.2	1.19	40	13000	23217	1.72	1.73	1.71	1.71	0.01	1.721	2
1.250	1.250	JOR. TONG. INDUSTRIES	17.0	0.00	325	77139	104425	1.23	1.27	1.23	1.25	0.01	1.256	2
0.970	0.910	JOR. KEM. CEMENT CO.	25.8	0.00	96	71439	68035	0.94	0.96	0.92	0.95	0.01	0.952	2
1.940	1.890	EL. - NAT. HEAT. PWR.	120.2	0.00	31	13030	24109	1.00	1.07	1.05	1.07	0.01	1.065	2
1.320	1.240	EL. TOBACCO	30.6	0.00	88	106190	128825	1.24	1.30	1.14	1.20	0.06	1.236	2
1.010	0.940	UNION CH. & YMS.	25.6	0.00	129	99474	103137	0.91	1.07	0.93	1.04	0.07	1.042	2
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR														
1.150	1.030	INTERMED. PAPER. CHEN.	5.2	1.19	50	11550	10819	1.07	1.16	1.09	1.10	0.04	1.100	2
2.520	2.520	UNION CEMENT. IND.	69.0	0.00	1	243	461	2.52	2.78	2.64	2.64	0.29	2.728	2
4.200	3.910	ALADIM CO.	22.2	3.03	2	158710	427243	3.90	3.99	3.99	3.99	0.21	3.990	1
0.890	0.790	JOR. SULPHUR-CHEN.	-	0.00	11	4300	3501	0.79	0.82	0.80	0.82	0.03	0.815	2
1.500	1.310	ARAB FERTILISER CHEN.	27.5	0.00	167	62050	92776	1.40	1.52	1.45	1.47	0.01	1.495	2
1.130	1.130	KAWTHER INVEST.	39.5	5.45	1	100	112	1.12	1.10	1.10	1.10	0.02	1.100	2
1.800	1.990	UNIV. BOOK. DES.	5.2	1.19	40	13000	23217	1.72	1.73	1.71	1.71	0.01	1.721	2
1.250	1.250	JOR. TONG. INDUSTRIES	17.0	0.00	325	77139	104425	1.23	1.27	1.23	1.25	0.01	1.256	2
0.970	0.910	JOR. KEM. CEMENT CO.	25.8	0.00	96	71439	68035	0.94	0.96	0.92	0.95	0.01	0.952	2
1.940	1.890	EL. - NAT. HEAT. PWR.	120.2	0.00	31	13030	24109	1.00	1.07	1.05	1.07	0.01	1.065	2
1.320	1.240	EL. TOBACCO	30.6	0.00	88	106190	128825	1.24	1.30	1.14	1.20	0.06	1.236	2
1.010	0.940	UNION CH. & YMS.	25.6	0.00	129	99474	103137	0.91	1.07	0.93	1.04	0.07	1.042	2
GRAND TOTAL														
1879 1561605 3274631 INDEX NUMBER 154.01 CHANGE 10.02														
NO. OF DAYS TRADED : 5														
DAILY AVERAGE OF TRADING VOLUME : 312,321														
DAILY AVERAGE OF TRADED SHARES : 376														
DAILY AVERAGE OF CONTRACTS : 376														
DURING THE LAST 3 WEEKS														
PRICE	LOW	COMPANY NAME	P/E	DIV	NO. OF CONTRACTS	NO. OF SHARES EXERCISED	VALUE TRADED JD	OPENING PRICE	HIGH	LOW	CLOSING PRICE	CHANGE	AVERAGE PRICE	NO. OF TRADING DAYS
38.000	38.000	JOR. TOURIST TRAVEL COR.	2.4	2.77	1	200	7220	38.00	34.10	26.10	36.10	- 1.90	36.100	1
0.520	0.490	CENTRAL GEN. STORES	20.5	0.00	4	2150	1477	0.49	0.51	0.50	0.51	0.02	0.506	2
0.540	0.500	JOR. TRADE FAC.	14.4	0.00	71	138259	75454	0.52	0.55	0.52	0.54	0.02	0.540	2
0.470	0.410	ARAB FID. INVEST.	-	0.00	46	62000	22575	0.46	0.47	0.45	0.45	0.01	0.456	2
0.730	0.700	TRAV. INV. SEC.	64.9	0.00	17	64585	16517	0.72	0.73	0.72	0.72	0.01	0.720	2
0.490	0.470	AL-SHARJIA FID.	15.4	0.00	10	7032	3672	0.48	0.49	0.48	0.48	0.00	0.484	2
0.450	0.590	ARAB FOOD & MED.	-	0.00	25	20600	13045	0.55	0.59	0.62	0.63	0.02	0.631	2
0.530	0.460	ARAB INTL. INV. CO.	-	0.00	54	48350	32974	0.50	0.53	0.50	0.50	0.02	0.494	1
0.530	0.310	JOR. INDUS. MACH. JENCO	-	0.00	84	121500	37675	0.33	0.33	0.30	0.30	0.03	0.310	2
1.420	1.330	BALU. CHLORINE	-	0.00	11	15230	21766	1.40	1.40	1.30	1.38	0.02	1.396	2
0.580	0.550	BALU. TEXTILE	-	0.00	62	29073	15101	0.55	0.55	0.53	0.54	0.01	0.536	2

Graf on her way to Tokyo as father convicted of tax evasion

MELBOURNE (Agencies) — Steffi Graf was on a flight to Tokyo late Friday as news reached here of her father's imprisonment in Germany on tax evasion charges.

The World No.1 women's player had been recovering here from injury and illness after her shock defeat in the fourth round of the Australian tennis Open here last Sunday.

A Women's Tennis Association (WTA) spokesperson said Steffi had left on an evening flight for Tokyo where she will be competing in next week's Toray Pan Pacific Open.

She was expected to arrive in Tokyo early Saturday.

Peter Graf, 58, was sentenced to three years nine months' imprisonment in a Mannheim court in Germany on tax evasion charges.

It was not immediately clear how long he would have to spend in prison as he has already

spent 15 months in investigative custody while the probe into the family tax affairs was taking place.

Prosecutors had demanded a jail term of six years and nine months for Graf.

They accused him and a family tax adviser of evading 19.2 million marks (\$11.7 million at current exchange rates) in tax on Steffi's income between 1989 and 1993.

Had Steffi Graf still been in the Australian Open she would have played in the singles final Saturday.

Steffi was advised to rest at her Melbourne apartment to recuperate from an infected toe and a heat-related illness.

The World No.1 was dumped from the Australian Open by the 12th seeded south African Amanda Coetzer in oppressive heat in her earliest exit here since her early years on the

tour in 1983-84.

"I've been staying in, pretty much letting myself recover," 27-year-old Graf said in a statement released by the WTA.

"The doctor's orders were to rest and that's what I've been doing."

"I'm not the type that likes to be inactive, but in this case it was necessary."

Graf said she had been taking antibiotics for the infected toe.

"I have had a fever that we thought was due to the toe, but they think now that it may not have been related. I just may have picked up a virus somewhere."

Graf's defeat to the tenacious Coetzer ended an unbeaten run of 45 Grand Slam matches in which she had won six Grand Slams.



Vancouver Grizzlies forward Roy Rogers (L) tips the ball away from Denver Nuggets forward Antonio McDyess during the first quarter in Denver. Rogers stopped the pass, but hit the ball out of bounds (Reuters photo)

Hardaway sends Stoudamire a lesson as Heat beat Raptors

TORONTO (R) — Tim Hardaway scored 26 points and sent a message to Toronto's second-year guard Damon Stoudamire as the Miami Heat beat the Raptors 99-87 Thursday.

Sasha Danilovic added 16 and he and Hardaway combined for 11 points during a key run spanning the third and fourth quarters as the Heat continued their strong play on the road, winning for the fifth time in their last six games and pushing their record away from home to 20-5, best in the NBA.

Walt Williams had 23 points for Toronto and has 56 in his last two games. Stoudamire added 22 and 11 assists, but was bothered by Hardaway's defence, hitting just 7-of-20 shots.

For Hardaway, the game meant a little more than usual after Stoudamire criticized his ability in a published report.

"I wanted to make a statement," Hardaway said. "I went at Damon a little bit harder. In the first half I pressed a little too hard but in the second half I just took it to him."

"We made a couple of mistakes and they made us pay," Stoudamire said.

"They are a good ballclub and every time we had a let-down they capitalized. Tim played well, but I wasn't guarding him. When I was on him, I thought I played him well."

The game was the 17th straight in which the Heat have held an opponent

under 100 points and the 23rd time in 41 games that Miami has held a foe under 90.

At Cleveland, Michael Jordan scored 13 of his 32 points in the fourth quarter and keyed a 19-4 run that blew the game open as the Chicago Bulls defeated the Cavaliers 87-71.

"It was a hard-fought win," Jordan said. "We were able to hold them off in the second half and I was able to get some easy baskets in the fourth quarter."

Jordan made 10-of-24 shots and was 11-of-12 from the foul line following his 51-point effort Tuesday against New York.

Terrell Brandon scored all of his 21 points in the first three quarters and Chris Mills added 20 for the Cavaliers, who have dropped eight of their last nine.

In Anaheim, Darrick Martin scored 31 points, including three free throws with 16.2 seconds left that put Los Angeles ahead to stay, and the Clippers held on for their first win over the Seattle SuperSonics in nearly three years, 102-100.

Malik Sealy added 21 points for Los Angeles, which broke a 14-game losing streak against the SuperSonics, beating them for the first time since January 25, 1994.

The loss also ended Seattle's overall nine-game winning streak. Shawn Kemp had 26 points and 11 rebounds and Gary Payton

added 22 points before being ejected in the final seconds for the Sonics, who lost for just the third time in 17 games.

The Clippers scored the game's final six points.

In Houston, Sam Mack, starting for the ailing Mario Elie, scored a season-high 20 points as the Rockets raced to a 16-point halftime lead and held off the New Jersey Nets 111-106.

Hakeem Olajuwon and Clyde Drexler added 20 points apiece for Houston, which won for the fifth time in six games. The Rockets posted their eighth straight win over the Nets.

Olajuwon, who also had 10 rebounds, fell two assists shy of a triple-double as he and Drexler each had eight assists.

Kevin Willis added 16 points and 15 rebounds for the Rockets, who were without Elie and forward Charles Barkley. Elie had the flu, while Barkley missed his fourth straight game with a sprained right ankle.

At Indiana, Patrick Ewing scored 23 points, including the go-ahead basket with 17 seconds remaining, as the New York Knicks averted a Reggie Miller-led comeback and defeated the Pacers 92-90.

Chris Childs had 16 points and eight assists for the Knicks, who have won 17 of the last 21 regular-season meetings with Indiana.

Travis Best finished with 22 points and Miller scored 10 of his 21 in the fourth quarter for the Pacers.

In Orlando, Derek Strong scored eight of his 14 points in the final four minutes and grabbed 11 rebounds as the Magic beat the Milwaukee Bucks 96-92.

Penny Hardaway and Rony Seikaly had 23 apiece for Orlando, which won for the sixth time in seven games. The Magic, who lost the first two games with the Bucks this season, beat them for the 10th time in the last 13 meetings.

Tom Gugliotta scored a season-high 33 points as the Minnesota Timberwolves won for the first time in Vancouver, defeating the Grizzlies 95-76.

Gugliotta, who scored 18 points on 9-of-11 shooting in the first quarter, also grabbed 15 rebounds.

At Golden State, Terry Mills had 22 points and Lindsey Hunter added 19 as the Detroit Pistons snapped a modest two-game slide by routing the Warriors 94-79.

Latrell Sprewell led Golden State with 18 points and Donyell Marshall and Joe Smith added 17 apiece.

Zurbriggen and Kostner in dead heat

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO (R) — Switzerland's Heidi Zurbriggen won her second women's World Cup Alpine skiing downhill of the season on Friday but she had to share the victory with Italy's Isolde Kostner.

The two women clocked identical times of one minute 30.81 seconds down the 2,490-metre Olympia Delle Tofane Piste.

Germany's Katja Seizinger, winner of the first downhill of the season in Lake Louise, was third in one of the closest finishes ever, two hundredths of a second behind.

It was only the sixth time in World Cup history that a race had been tied and, curiously, the last such occurrence was on the same Cortina Piste in a women's Super-G in 1994.

Kostner, who won one of two downhills here last year, started immediately after Zurbriggen and was 0.36 seconds ahead at the first intermediate timing but then faded.

She was 0.08 ahead at the second intermediate. Zurbriggen, sister of former world and Olympic champion Pirmin, had won only once before — at Lillehammer last year —

going into this season but this was her second consecutive win in a month.

The veteran Swiss, who will be 30 in March, won the last, fog-hit downhill in bad Kleinkirchheim, Austria.

Friday's race was briefly halted after American Megan Gerety, the 16th starter, crashed heavily coming off a jump at high speed and careered into the safety netting.

Gerety got to her feet after the accident and appeared to have escaped serious injury.



Russia's Warwara Zelenskaja is airborne as she passes a gate on her way to set the fastest time in the official practice for the women's World Cup Downhill. Zelenskaja clocked 1:31.24 ahead of Swiss Heidi Zurbriggen who clocked 1:31.29 (Reuters photo)

JORDAN TIMES TEL: 699634 - 684311



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Pictured are the Sydney 2000 Olympic's official mascots which were launched in Sydney, January 24. The mascots are modelled on three native Australian animals. From (L to R) "Ollie", the kookaburra, "Syd" the platypus and "Mille" the echidna. The mascots will be used as the centrepiece of Olympic promotions in the run-up to the 2000 Games (Reuters photo)

Stoudamire beat Raptors

Michael Stoudamire of the New York Knicks beat the Toronto Raptors 101-90 in a game that was a defensive struggle. Stoudamire scored 22 points, including a clutch shot in the fourth quarter. The Knicks' defense was key, holding the Raptors to 35 points in the paint. Stoudamire's performance was a turning point for the Knicks, who were looking to improve their record. The game was a testament to Stoudamire's skill and the team's defensive strategy.

Pierce's power threatens Hingis in women's final today

MELBOURNE (AFP) — Mary Pierce will be a major threat to Martina Hingis in the Australian Open women's final with her powerful ground shots and new mobility. Amanda Coetzer said here Thursday. Pierce blitzed the South African 7-5, 6-1 in the semifinal to earn a place in the final against the Swiss teenager. Coetzer is Pierce's doubles partner and knows her well. The French star is back to the form she had in 1994-95 when she was a defeated finalist at Roland Garros and won the Australian title. "She played extremely well" in the semifinal, Coetzer said. Pierce "is playing aggressive, she is taking the ball early, she's playing deep and long. She is more concentrated," said her fourth round victim, fifth seeded German Anke Huber. Formerly the 1.80m (5ft

10 in) French baseliner was seen as a big-hitter but slow about the court. Pierce says she has worked to improve her footwork. "She moved pretty well today... and she picked quite a few balls," said Coetzer, who saw Pierce dash to the net to recover at least two difficult drop shots. Hingis is ranked fourth in the world while Pierce has slumped from a high of three down to the current 22. But the unseeded French-American goes into the final with a 3-0 record over the 16-year-old Swiss. And that means the 22-year-old Pierce will go confidently into the centre court decider, says Mary Joe Fernandez. Hingis dismissed the veteran American 6-1, 6-3 in the second semi-final. Pierce is the "type of player that really thrives on confidence."

Once she gets confident she's very hard to stop," Coetzer warned. Fernandez thinks that Pierce hits "hard enough where she can hurt" Hingis. The American provided scant opposition to the stylish Swiss who, she said anticipates and moves very well. Hingis has become more focused and consistent in the past year, she said. Coetzer said Hingis — who she played in the Hopman Cup three weeks ago — is playing "extremely well." "She's taking the ball early and she's coming into the net a lot and she will definitely rush Mary a lot more than I did," she said. Pierce said she knew that Hingis liked pace and "handles pace very well." "She doesn't seem to like the ball get to the ball, but she is always there so not to underestimate her," she said.

Statistics for women finalists		
Age	Martina Hingis 16	Mary Pierce 22
Nationality	Swiss	French
Plays	Righthanded	Righthanded
World Ranking	4	22
Highest Career Ranking	4	3
Head-To-Head	0	3
Hard Court Head To Head	0	1-1
Grand Slam Final W/L	25-8	60-17
Grand Slam W/L	\$1.6 Million	\$2.34 Million
Career Earnings	Melanie Molitor	Sven Groeneveld
Coach		

Hingis wins doubles on way to singles final

MELBOURNE (R) — Swiss teenager Martina Hingis won her second Grand Slam doubles title at the Australian Open Friday in a playful demolition she hopes to repeat in the single's final against Mary Pierce on Saturday. Sixteen-year-old Hingis, who will become the youngest Grand Slam single's winner in modern tennis if she beats Pierce, beamed a playful smile throughout the match as she and Natasha Zvereva, from Belarus, buried the tournament's third seeds. American pair Lindsay Davenport and Lisa Raymond could not see the humour, unsuccessfully attempting to steer the ball away from Hingis on the way to a 6-2 6-2 defeat. Hingis became the youngest ever Wimbledon champion last year when

she and Helena Sukova won the doubles final. Hingis was aged just 15 years and 282 days. "I love to be here in front of all this crowd and it's just great to play here in Australia. Hopefully I have a good day tomorrow," Hingis shares \$180,000 in prize money for Friday's victory, but will collect a much fatter cheque if she beats unseeded Pierce, who was champion here in 1995. Australia's most successful doubles partnership, Mark Woodforde and Todd Woodbridge, earned a chance to grab their eighth Grand Slam doubles title on Friday when they won their semifinal. The top-seeded "woodies" beat American pair Rick Leach and Jonathan Stark in four sets 6-3 7-6 5-7 6-1. The Woodies are on a roll after a sensational year in

1996, when they won the Olympics and lifted their fourth straight Wimbledon doubles title, the first pair to do so this century. They now meet seventh seeded Sebastian Lareau of Canada and Alex O'Brien of the United States in the final on Saturday.

Australian Open Sampras storms past Muster into final

MELBOURNE (R) — World No. 1 Pete Sampras stormed into his 11th Grand Slam final on Friday with a straight-sets demolition of Austrian baseliner Thomas Muster at the Australian Open. The 25-year-old American played at his powerful best, serving strongly and returning almost everything fifth-seeded Muster could blast at him to win 6-1 7-6 6-3 in under two hours. "He doesn't give you many chances and if you don't take those you're going to lose," said Muster, who bowed in tribute to Sampras before the crowd followed with a standing ovation. It was one of the best per-

formances of Sampras's nine-year career, and one bound to strike fear into the heart of unseeded Spaniard Carlos Moya, who will meet Sampras in Sunday's final. Moya, who beat World No. 2 Michael Chang in the first men's semifinal on Thursday, had promised to watch the match from the air-conditioned comfort of his hotel bedroom. Sampras won the Australian Open in 1994 and was runner-up to Andre Agassi the following year. He has won eight Grand Slam titles — only the French Open has eluded him. Muster, the game's supreme baseliner, has won 40 of his 42 career titles on

clay and had been hungry to show his detractors that he could play with the best on a hardcourt surface. But Sampras closed him out of the match, serving 16 aces and changing pace and length to break Muster's rhythm. Muster said he had tried hard to crack Sampras's backhand, only to find the top seed really had no weak points. After a lightning first set lasting only 29 minutes, Muster fought his way back into the match in the second set. Chasing every ball and hitting with heavy topspin, he broke Sampras's serve in the sixth game and built up a 5-2 lead. Sampras broke him in the following game

and went on to take a tie-break decider 7-3. The final set belonged to Sampras from start to finish, but the super-fit Muster never threw in the towel. At 0-3, Muster hit what looked like a winning ball sharply across the court only to see Sampras backhand it around the net post. "Play left-handed Pete," one fan shouted as Sampras charged past his opponent. Sampras missed one match point on Muster's serve at 5-2 but served out the match to love. After ousting World No. 4 Goran Ivanisevic in the quarter-finals on Tuesday, Muster revealed he was using a computer to analyse his opponents' game.

But silicon-chip technology was of little use against Sampras at the top of his form. "The computer was good and it told me exactly the right things," said Muster. "But you have to make the shots." Moya's best chance in Sunday's final is that Sampras will be feeling the effects of having played two five-setters en route to the final. Sampras himself was keen not to underestimate his young opponent: "To beat Michael (Chang) in straight sets is not easy to do... He's pretty confident, he's got nothing to lose, it's going to be a good fight on Sunday."

Chang to persevere after coming up short again

MELBOURNE (AFP) — Michael Chang was preparing to pick himself up and try again after failing in his quest for another Grand Slam tennis title here Thursday. The second seeded American, a joint favourite with Pete Sampras to win this year's Australian title, was hammered in straight sets by super Spaniard Carlos Moya in a semifinal. For Chang it was the latest in a catalogue of missed opportunities for a Grand Slam title following up to his 1989 French Open triumph as a 17-year-old. It was a heavy defeat for Chang. Unseeded Moya swept to a 7-5, 6-2, 6-4 victory in two hours and six minutes. His opponent in

Sunday's final will be World No. 1 Pete Sampras who beat Austrian fifth seed Thomas Muster in the other semifinal (see separate story). Chang faced up to his questioners at his post-match press conference and said it would not deter him from regrouping and trying again, with the French Open in Paris in May his next objective. "Today is a disappointing day, but part of being a champion is being able to take the tough losses and being able to rebound from them," he said. "Everybody can take the winning; it's the times when you need to come back from matches like this." Chang said the leadup matches against Andrei

Medvedev and Marcelo Rios had taken something out of him. "I was a little bit fatigued. The match with Andrei was extremely hot that day and the match I played against Marcelo, although the temperature dropped, it was extremely humid. "But for the most part physical conditioning is not a very good excuse when you're playing here in Australia because you know that's part of tennis." Chang said it normally took him a day to get over his disappointment of a defeat at a Grand Slam.



Michael Chang of the U.S. sits in dejection after being defeated by Spain's Carlos Moya in their semi-final match at the Australian Open January 23. Moya won in straight sets 7-5 6-2 6-4 (Reuters photo)

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